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UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

OPENING *QUEST-IONING* OF PERSONAL/PUBLIC MEANINGS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP INCARNATE

BY

LOREN CHARLES HART (C)

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

(SPRING, 1991)

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Canada

December 3, 1990

Dr. L. Charles Hart
Box 1997
Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0

Dear Charles:

I hereby grant you permission to include the article which we co-authored, "Talk To Learn: An Action Research Unfolding," in the publication of your dissertation at the University of Alberta.

Sincerely,

K. Smith

Kathy Smith

December 3, 1990

Dr. L. Charles Hart
Box 1997
Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0

Dear Charles:

I hereby grant you permission to include the article which we co-authored, "Creative Curriculum for Inner-City People: A Case Study of Alex Taylor Community School," in the publication of your dissertation at the University of Alberta.

Sincerely,

Steve Ramsankar

Dr. Steve Ramsankar
Principal
Alex Taylor Community School

December 3, 1990

Dr. L. Charles Hart
Box 1997
Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0

Dear Charles:

I hereby grant you permission to include the article which we co-authored, "Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation," in the publication of your dissertation at the University of Alberta.

Sincerely,

Dale Ripley

December 3, 1990

Dr. L. Charles Hart
Box 1997
Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0

Dear Charles:

I hereby grant you permission to include the article which we co-authored, "Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation," in the publication of your dissertation at the University of Alberta.

Sincerely,

Leora E. Poulin

Leora Poulin

Never did I realize that a simple evaluation would go so far. LP

December 3, 1990

Dr. L. Charles Hart
Box 1997
Taber, Alberta, T0K 2G0

Dear Charles:

I hereby grant you permission to include the article which we co-authored, "Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation," in the publication of your dissertation at the University of Alberta.

Sincerely,

N. Maguire

Nora Maguire

UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

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TITLE OF THESIS: Opening *Quest-ioning* of Personal/Public Meanings for Instructional Leadership Incarnate

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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University of Pittsburgh

Date: November 2, 1990

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my grandparents:

Ella Emma Colby and William Edgar (Fred) Hart

Hazel Sperry and Jim Luster

who in their retirement years faced the responsibility

for my upbringing

and who provided me with the means and motivation

to search for an education of inquiry and service.

Abstract

A classroom teacher questions and quests for meanings of instructional leadership in relation to lived--incarnate--experiences with administrators and teachers as well as the communities of children and parents whom they serve. Prompted by a critical "reflection through recollection" (Garman, 1986b) of the author's past personal practice, this inquiry investigates public definitions of *instructional leadership* as an authorized administrative term (Minister of Education for the Province of Alberta, 1988) and searches to understand how the said of educational literature connects with the daily saying of instructing and leading others.

By developing methodologies of collaborative inquiry with two elementary principals and one junior high school language arts coordinator, educators from different sites pooled their knowledge, skills, and time in learning to move beyond an ethics of anonymity toward an ethics of collaborative authorship. Instead of writing about practitioners, portions of this dissertation model alternative approaches for studying and writing with educational practitioners about processes of leadership at specific schooling sites.

But autobiographical, literary, and collaborative efforts to understand personal and public meanings of instructional leadership revealed that linguistic power struggles lie at the core of all attempts to explain educational practice. Even though words are often used to try and freeze the flow of a continuously moving world into more seemingly fixed labels, each signifier is part of the mysterious flux of the meaning of being (Heidegger, 1960) and can never be completely fixed from slippage.

Language can only hint at that which is beyond interpretation: of ageless responsibilities which are "otherwise" than an unconcealment of "being" (Levinas, 1981). In trying to signify unsignifiable obligations for others, the author first revisits previously co-authored texts; second, he re-enters the quest to say personally what he thinks of instructional leadership. The first process reinterprets a past said in order to symbolize how the saying of life is an ongoing search to find ways to move forward with others. The latter opens "mytho-poetic imagination" (Macdonald, 1981) as a means for stepping

beyond drives to satiate or disclose selfish intentions and ripening toward a constantly exposed abundance for facing and serving others lovingly.

PREFACE (OR "PRE-FACE")

"The preface is where authors can take off their clothes and show themselves naked." (Chambers, 1990)

In an attempt to expose more of my authored nakedness, I write this preface, or as many of my students have often mispronounced, "*pre-face*." Over the years I have rather grown to like my students' miscue because what I am striving for is to *face* analytic spectators in *advance* and provide a leading snapshot of who I am, how I came to say what I have said, and why I hope my words can become imaginative participants in ongoing journeys for authoring readers.

Any who undertake to decipher this work should know, therefore, that my dissertation unfolds meanings of *instructional leadership* as interpreted by a classroom teacher. I have no claim to any previous administrative title. Prior to my doctoral studies and work as a faculty associate for a local university, I taught in secondary schools for 12 years. During my tenth, eleventh, and twelfth teaching years (1984-1987), I seriously began to question issues related to leadership, supervision, and evaluation of teachers out of a sense of personal crisis: I believed that I must either leave the teaching profession or find ways for myself and other teachers to interact differently with the school administrators and educational researchers. I have documented my autobiographical trials in Chapter 4 ("Notes From Within And Without The Underground Archipelago"), which marks the chronological starting point of this dissertative pilgrimage.

The next steppingstones of my authoring journey opened up just as I was completing the initial draft of my autobiographical "reflections through recollection" (Garman, 1986c) in Chapter 4. In December 1987 I attended a lecture presentation by Dr. Pat Klinck, who informed me that *instructional leadership* was a popular but problematic administrative term in the public school system of Calgary, Alberta. In January 1988, I was invited to work with Dale Ripley, who at that time was principal of the St. Gerard Elementary School. Like Klinck, he was also questioning meanings of instructional leadership, which was becoming a very popular word for administrators in Edmonton Catholic Schools, and he was wondering what implications such a current public view of school administration might have on an "action research" project (Kemmis & McTaggart,

1982) which he was organizing with two teachers on his school's staff, Leora Poulin and Nora Maguire. They wanted to explore ways of involving teachers in the evaluation of their own teaching.

For three months, I actively participated in their cycles of *planning*, *acting*, *observing*, and *reflecting*. After our field work, I spent the next two months completing a literature review of *instructional leadership* and drafting reports of what we were learning by comparing our field experiences with educational literature. After the summer break, I worked with Dale, Leora, and Nora in planning, writing, and publishing the first collaborative article of Chapter 5, "Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation" (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, & Maguire, 1989). Our experiences of collectively investigating and authoring our conclusions about teacher evaluation confirmed my belief that teachers could interact with school administrators and university facilitators in democratic ways that allowed teachers to move beyond an ethics of anonymity toward an ethics of authorship.

My review of literature about instructional leadership concurrently began to open other doors for me. Not only did it grow to become the basis of Chapter 2, "Searching for a Public/Personal Understanding of the Naming of Instructional Leadership," but it also provided me with an ethnographic framework called Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL) (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert, 1983; Barnett, 1985, 1987) for studying instructional leadership at another school site. In fact, I already had a particular school in mind.

One of the reasons I initially wanted to complete a doctorate at the University of Alberta was the opportunity I would have to study with Dr. Steve Ramsankar, principal of Alex Taylor Community School. I had first become acquainted with Steve's approach to community education through viewing a Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC, 1985) television broadcast called "School as a Loving Place" on the weekly program Man Alive. A year later, I happened to meet Steve at an educational conference in Dayton, Ohio. Soon after my arrival at Edmonton in September 1987, I started visiting Alex Taylor School and investigating how I could conduct research at the school.

I strongly considered a collaborative autobiography approach (Butt & Raymond, 1987; Butt, Raymond, & Ray 1988) or an action research project (Kemmis & Mctaggart),

but neither methodology seemed practical or relevant for my questions at that time. The PAL framework, however, allowed me to focus specifically on an analysis of Steve's qualities as a leader, and Steve agreed to let me try this new approach for defining instructional leadership. From June to July 1988 I implemented Barnett's (1987) outline of PAL, shadowing and reflecting upon Steve's styles of leadership with an experienced staff at the end of a school year and with a new staff at the beginning of a summer school program. After the field work, the second collaborative article in Chapter 5, "Creative Curriculum for Meeting the Needs of Inner-city People: A Case Study of Alex Taylor Community School," was drafted, and the next year, we presented that paper at a conference in Holland (Ramsankar & Hart, 1989). Although the PAL methodology which I had employed at Alex Taylor School differed from the action research project at St. Gerard School, the processes of educators from different sites corroborantly pooling their knowledge, skills, and time and collaboratively authoring reflective descriptions of their experiences were emerging as the ethical principles which grounded my search for alternative ways of studying and writing about leadership in schools.

While my autobiographical, literary, and collaborative efforts had helped me uncover personal and public meanings of instructional leadership, they had also led me into a cul-de-sac of language power struggles. For example, the recent passage of the School Act for Alberta (Minister of Education, 1988) proclaims that the first duty which all principals "must provide" is "instructional leadership" (p. 14). What made such a decree especially interesting to me was the complete absence of more established terms such as *supervision of instruction* or *clinical supervision*. It seemed that the vocabulary for administratively looking at instruction had suddenly changed. The usage of *supervision* had become a linguistic anachronism. Instead, an organization such as The Alberta Consortium for the Development of Leadership (1988, May) was established by governmental, teacher, school board, and university associations in order to generate support for thinking about the newer slogans of leadership. *Instructional leadership* had become a vogue legal term.

My literature review revealed, however, that attempts to define this chic

expression were caught up in political interpretation games. A large group of educators were delimiting instructional leadership as part of the "effective schools" movement (Achilles, 1987; Barth, 1987; Davis & Nicklos, 1986; Ellis, 1986; Kroeze, 1984; McGee, 1986; Peterson, 1986, 1987). Another smaller group, which my own writing tended to mirror, advocated a more reflective explanation (Barnett, 1985, 1987; Blumberg, 1987; Dwyer, 1986a, 1986b; Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert; Schon, 1984; Thoms, 1986). Bates (1986), Duignan and Macpherson (1986), and Klinck, on the other hand, wrote about instructional leadership as an ideological development which required moral and social critique. Each set of authors attempted to redefine instructional leadership according to their particular way of looking at the world, and in so doing, each selected different vocabularies in explaining their techniques or approaches for thinking about instructional leadership.

I came to see language (not debates about evaluation techniques or reflective analysis or critical critique) as the undeclared battleground for competitively theorizing about administrative practice, and I discovered that I wanted to make more apparent both the advantages and limitations of using language to interpret and delineate educational action. In Chapter 1, therefore, I write what, to some readers, may seem an embellished word play. But for me, my examination of each word of my framing question--"What are the meanings of and for instructional leadership incarnate?"--is a pivotal part of my inquiry into the paradoxical powers of language.

I began writing Chapter 1 in the Winter of 1988-1989 with the intent of following a well established format for dissertation writing (Long, 1985) by including definitions of key terms. Since I had written much of Chapter 2, I had already decided that I did not simply want to adopt one of the denotations outlined in the literature review. Instead, I hoped to keep the definition of instructional leadership alive as a question. Initially, the word *incarnate* was a linguistic signifier that I used for making any explanation of instructional leadership problematic. When I asked friends, colleagues, or educational researchers what "*instructional leadership incarnate*" meant, none of them were able to give me technical or dogmatic answers. I believed that the addition of a single adjective

could provoke more openness to the mystery of lived meanings.

As I incorporated the expression "instructional leadership incarnate" into a formal question, I intuitively started to investigate each word in my question. In so doing, I learned that it was not just *instructional leadership incarnate*, my three power words, that were important in crafting an enigmatic definition. In fact, what many readers might regard as the least important words became, for me, content and contextual clues important enough to arouse an abundance of mystery. For example, in the Fall of 1989, two of my papers included in Chapter 6, "Let Voice Be Questioned Why? (the-one-for-the-other)" and "Walking Behind Gladly And ***," were inspired by my contemplating how a preposition (*for*) and a conjunction (*and*) influenced my interpretations of instructional leadership. I had uncovered for myself that even though language is often used to try and freeze the flow of a continuously moving world into more seemingly fixed labels, each language signifier is still part of the mysterious flux of living.

In early February 1989, while I was completing the third draft of my introductory chapter, I sensed a need to return to the flow of complexities involved with instructing and leading in an actual school situation. I began a collaborative inquiry with Kathy Smith, a teacher and Language Arts Coordinator at a junior high school in a suburb of Edmonton. She and I had met while enrolled in graduate classes at the University of Alberta in 1987-1988. Our course work had exposed us to common readings in educational literature, allowed us to share some of our respective ideas about teaching, and helped us establish a foundation for planning a collegial alliance at Kathy's school where we would explore relationships between student and teacher evaluation.

Initially, Kathy represented a way for me to broaden the definition of instructional leadership. My previous field studies were with two inner-city principals, whose positions in their elementary schools gave them *de jure* power for being instructional leaders. When a principal requests help on a project, it may be somewhat difficult for a teacher simply to refuse to help. But Kathy's appointment as Language Arts Coordinator was subject-centered and did not come with definitive powers over other teachers. When Kathy first invited staff members to participate in an investigation of

qualitative evaluation processes, no one felt obliged to join our team. In order for us to involve other teachers, Kathy and I needed to communicate a *de facto* credibility in what we were doing and why it was important.

In order for us to make connections with others, and also to strengthen our working relationship with each other, we discovered that we needed to search for a variety of opportunities to talk--to dialogue--as collaborators and with colleagues, students, and parents. For instance, Kathy and I met at least once a week to discuss our plans and actions; we exchanged journals as a way of carrying on reflective written talk about our thoughts throughout the week; we asked the principal to review and critique our plans; we informed parents of our project and invited them to express their concerns about student evaluation; I interviewed a sample of students about their perceptions of evaluation while Kathy carried on journal dialogues with students; we conversed with teachers in the staff room and repeatedly looked for openings where their ideas and interests could be adjoined with ours. Some of the consequences of our labours were: we were able to involve other language arts teachers in planning a poetry workshop day for the 130 Grade Seven students in the school; one teacher invited me to observe several of her classes and reflect on some of the self-evaluation techniques she was using with students; the principal requested that Kathy report on our work to the entire staff at a faculty retreat; and Kathy and I co-authored papers which we published and presented at an education conference (Hart & Smith, 1989/1990; Smith & Hart, 1990). Each of these ventures were incremental steps attempting to rethink instructional leadership as collaborative processes which floated on a sea of interactive language: we were trying to keep a variety of conversations going that could help us learn to work with teachers in educating children.

But my experiences with Kathy also helped me understand more about the critical limitations of relying too much upon language. No matter how much I worked to prove the formidable importance of each and every word and no matter how much I informally relied upon an ocean of conversational signifiers to build collaborative relationships with colleagues, the essential aim for instructional leadership could not be voiced. As Levinas

(1981) explains, "The birthplace of ontology is the said," but "the responsibility for another is precisely a saying prior to anything said" (p. 43). The question of instructional leadership is not just toward a definition of how to guide the ontological growth of others toward excellence; instead, teaching and leading individuals to gain an authentic voice also attends to an ageless responsibility for others. Such accountability transcends description but continually invites observant, disciplined thought and action.

And it was in the expression of my personal thoughts and actions that my Candidacy Committee, in April 1989, found my doctoral proposal to be lacking. By attempting to adhere to methodologies of collaborative inquiry and authorship, I was not allowing my personal reflections to be a part of my dissertation as they had started to be when I wrote my autobiographical "archipelago" in Chapter 4. For several months after my candidacy review, I found it nearly impossible to put any of my ideas into words. Although I saw a very important need to try to step beyond the restrictions imposed by collaborative methodologies, I seemed unable to descend back into the lonely stress and strife of interpreting my private thoughts about lived meanings of instructional leadership.

During August of 1989, while Kathy and I were completing our co-authored article, titles of essays began to present themselves to me. They were somewhat like neglected Pirendello (1952) characters in search of an author. "A Personal Declaration For Teaching Being" was a brief kerygmatic statement of my beliefs about teaching which I had written nearly a year before, and the signifiers in that text now longed to be reheard as a prologue to Chapter 6. "Spare the Red Pen and See The Child" and "Let Voice Be Questioned Why? (the-one-for-the-other)" were two fresh candidates borne into the written form. The first title depicts my "unlearning" of an instructional technique as an initial step toward my learning a pedagogy that begins to disclose and be exposed to the mystery in the meanings of each child's being. The second fleshes out meanings of two questions which can serve as mnemonic guides for responsive and responsible instruction. The last title, "Walking Behind Gladly & ***," was composed by the guest authors of Seeseasi and Seeville (1989), whose pseudonyms symbolize the decentered author: no

individual's identity is ever completely known. Their collaborative essay walked past a still anonymous and un-authored competitor who claimed to believe that instructive leading meant being silent but who was unable to express such an idea. Seeseasi and Seeville maintain that reciprocally reconstructing meanings of voiced and voiceless dialogues is how to find oneness with self and with others. Yet they also reflectively recognize through their use of three spaced asterisks, which is a means of designating ellipsis (Webster's Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary, 1985), that incompleteness punctuates all processes of individual and collaborative interpretation. They argue for an understanding of instructional leadership that entails not only guiding--walking ahead--toward visions of imagined possibilities but includes the paradox of following--walking behind--with reconstructions for lived actualities.

Once I had completed the four essays in Chapter 6, I engaged in an additional process of personal reconstruction by "revisiting" (Huxley, 1958, [Brave New World Revisited]) my earlier collaborative articles. By the Winter of 1990, sufficient time had passed for me to recognize some of the problems with my earlier co-authored papers. Instead of re-writing or re-editing what I now consider faults out of the original texts, I wanted to model that it is possible to learn both from feats and defeats. My revisits endeavor to show that interpretation, even the re-explanation of texts which one has helped write, involves repetitive processes of looking and listening again at the changes of meanings which take place with experience over time. As Gadamer (1986) explains: "It is important to note that all interpretation points in a direction rather than to some final endpoint, in the sense that it points toward an open realm that can be filled in a variety of ways" (p. 68). I revisited articles not to reminisce but to dialogue toward renewed understandings of how to move onward.

Consequently, all of the now connected fragments of this dissertation, even the signifiers which comprise this "PREFACE (OR PRE-FACE)" and the last words which I have penned in Chapter 7, "Emergent Meanings/Opening Other-Wise & Learning to Ripen," represent my commitment to continuing inquiry. I have not completed this doctorate in order to insulate myself from problems or to be pleased with my present or

previous accomplishments. Even as I write, I am planning to embrace the difficulties of public education by again serving as a teacher. In so doing, I realize that I have not had the strength or knowledge or discipline to author the conclusive definition of instructional leadership. I hope that my failures may be forgiven as coming from one who cares deeply about the quality of teaching and administration in schools. Like the Shakespearean fool who could never be a king but whose survival depended on both humouring and provoking the sovereign, I pray for the wisdom and strength of my leaders, and I pledge to work at making schools reconstructive learning sites for the children, teachers, and administrators with whom I associate. For me, *instruction* and *leadership* are not just concepts or practices which executives model or manage over teachers who, in turn, manipulate students. Instead, my existential reconceptualization of instructional leadership envisions a variety of educators building bridges between the archipelagoes of their classroom and office doors and collaboratively and personally learning to make meaningful differences in the lives of the children who pass through the thresholds of their schools and classrooms.

And so I have written these words--which seem to be the best means at my disposal for preserving my experiences and thoughts for the passage of time--with a faith that they may cause some eyes to glance more intently at the surrounding public visions of instructional leadership and to search for personal reconstructions of how to guide and to follow leadership at their respective educational sites. It really does not concern me how my dissertation is read. Its present organization generally follows an established structure for educational dissertations: introduction, review of literature, method, results, and conclusions (Long). In this "PREFACE (PRE-FACE)," I have revealed the chronological evolution and the underlying purposes for each segment of this extended piece of writing. But the structures, developmental sequences, or intentions are not as important as the reader's interaction with the content. I have offered what I was able and leave it to readers to find what are nutritious grains of thought for themselves and to jettison what is chaff.

Readers, start where you want! Within the limitations of what I have written, I am

content to follow that which interests you. There is an abundance of mystery in each atom for all to share and a need for each person to be more open for the other. My joy is if these words itch at your ears and provoke further *quest-ioning*--asking why and learning how to embark on individual and social quests for responsibly instructing and leading other incarnate beings.

Acknowledgements

So many have shared in helping me script these words that it is impossible to thank them all. Nevertheless, I wish to acknowledge the contributions of the following people:

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Dr. Steve Ramsankar for his many years of exemplary service as a teacher and for his daily greetings of loving hello's.

Dr. Dale Ripley, for returning a phone call, extending an invitation, and becoming a scholarly and caring friend.

Mrs. Kathy Smith, for letting me use her door to enter a junior high school and for being an exemplar of learning.

Mrs. Laurie Chomany, for mind-full conversations which have ripened into decades of colleagueship and friendship.

For my children, Kimberly and Spencer, who patiently endured and inspired their father's passion to author.

And especially for my wife, Dorothy, who sacrificed her home and friends in being her husband's best friend.

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CHAPTER 1

Opening

Quest-ioning of Personal/Public Meanings

for Instructional Leadership Incarnate

Introduction

wife's QUESTION: *"A friend of mine once said, 'There is an answer; we just don't know what it is yet.' What do you think of that statement?"*

HUSBAND'S reply: *"I would say, 'There is a question; we just don't know how to ask it yet.'"*

WIFE'S RESPONSE: *"After 16 years of marriage, I have an inkling of why you would say that, but I am not going to try and share your idea with my friends."*

The intent of this inquiry is to open divers conversations that question meaning, specifically the meanings of the concept--*instructional leadership*--for four educators (including myself) who are working in elementary and secondary schools. In my mode of asking, "an answer" is not what is most important; instead, I seek the *quest-* (the evolving journey) and the *-ioning* (the mysterious nonsense lurking within any signification) of *quest-ioning*. I am repeatedly "opening" an "opening" "opening," a signifier which simultaneously serves as a verb, adjective, and noun in my title. The variety of linguistic functions of my *opening* connotes a hope to write texts which invite and provoke a variety of dialogues that continually wonder how to make words *incarnate*--to flesh out lived meanings for dwelling among people--by repetitions of petitioning and *re-petitioning*: earnestly questing and requesting again how to proceed responsibly forward with others.

The methodology of my hermeneutic *quest-ioning* is grounded in the interplay of personal/public interpretations of meanings. Neither the domain of the private, autobiographic individual (the *personal*) nor the domain of a cultural, political community (the *public*) reigns supreme in determining the meanings of words, although the latter "will to power" usually appears to have the upper hand in establishing borders and maintaining limits. Both the etymologies and definitions of words in literature and in dictionaries demonstrate that interpretations of meaning change over time through individual and collective exchanges among speakers, listeners, readers, and writers. I have

attempted to acknowledge this negotiation in my title by separating-and-joining personal/public with a slash. For me, the slash between these two words is a diacritic conjunction which accents both the differences and the interrelationships between personal/public domains. Instead of claiming that my investigations will result in the substantiation of either "objectivism" or "rationalism" (Bernstein, 1983), my *quest-ioning* "of" and "for" meanings attempts to find ways of stepping between the subject/object dichotomy and of living on multiple edges of any dividing slash.

Public/Personal Significance Of The Study

"He who has a **why** *to live can bear with almost any* **how**." *(Frankel, 1962, p. 76)*

A study of the meanings of instructional leadership has significance because, in part, these particular words have been publicly sanctioned and authorized. As of January 1, 1989, the new School Act of the Province of Alberta (Minister of Education) legally requires that all principals "must provide instructional leadership in the school" (p. 14). This "duty" of principals is listed first, before the duties of being a curriculum insurer, school manager, student discipliner, public relations coordinator, supervisor for advancing students, evaluator of teachers, and representative of the school board. Beginning in 1989, Alberta's principals "must" be instructional leaders.

As Murphy (1987) explains, however, expectations for demonstrating instructional leadership have occurred without attempting to define to principals, teachers, or researchers what the term means, how it should be provided in schools, or how it relates to other administrative roles. Because the words have been enshrined for Albertans in a government sanctioned text, they will remain as part of the ideological law about "what principals 'must' do" after educators have either discovered the usefulness or suggested alternatives which may become more popular. It has become politically and pedagogically expedient for Albertan educators, especially principals of schools, to search for understandings of the roles and services of instructional leadership.

Alberta did not invent the term *instructional leadership*, though. Across North America a growing literature is thriving in relation to these two words. For example, An

Annotated Bibliography on Human Relations--Teachers and Administrators (1987) found that from 1982 to 1986 only 50 of 286 articles, 17.5%, concerned the principal's role as "instructional leader." In 1986 the number of educators using the term became sufficiently significant for the editors of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) thesaurus (Houston, 1987) to add it as a recognizable descriptor for cataloguing. In a search of ERIC SPIRES files on February 1, 1988, I found 117 abstracts; on January 11, 1989, I found 197; and on August 21, 1990, I located 415. It appears that the popularity of the term has grown considerably in the last five years. Nearly twice as many articles were catalogued on this subject in 1988 as were written in the four years prior to 1987, and the number of articles then doubled again between 1989 and 1990. In my initial search, I was interested in the finding that while more than half of the articles in the ERIC files directly related instructional leadership with principals, a third of the literature was directed for teachers. Addressing an audience of both principals and teachers seems to imply that teachers should be concerned about instructional leadership because it is a subject which will either indirectly or directly affect and involve them in their interrelationships with administrators.

As a teacher for 12 years, I found myself increasingly affected by administrative attitudes toward *how* I should be teaching. For example, Alberta Education's Management and Finance Plan (MFP) mandated that all schools have a teacher evaluation policy in place or suffer a loss of financing (Alberta Education, 1984). As a result, during the 1984-85 school year my school division executed four different policies for evaluating teachers and curriculum. None of the models of evaluation significantly involved teachers in processes designed to improve instruction nor was evaluation viewed as something done *with* teachers to assist professional development. Burger (1987) subsequently confirmed that my experiences with teacher evaluation were not isolated events: 50% of his survey of teachers in Alberta had no opportunity to provide input for generating teacher evaluation policies, and there was an "almost total absence" in any of the evaluation policies for promoting professional growth of teachers (pp. 73, 142).

The administrative attitude that teacher evaluation was something done *to* teachers helped provoke a personal crisis for me in respect to my own career. By January 1986, I was seriously considering giving up teaching as a profession, but I somehow managed to survive until the end of June. During the 1986-87 school year, I was able to carry out personal changes to the school's evaluation policies which allowed me to have more influence on how administrators evaluated me. Being able to contribute to processes of evaluation and to participate in a search for ways of improving my instruction allowed me to feel a more confident sense of purpose about my teaching; my relationship with administrators improved, and most importantly, my rapport with students was enriched. During my first semester as a doctoral student at the University of Alberta, I reflectively described my autobiographical experiences in a "letter-essay" (Haggerson, 1987) format, which I entitled "Notes From Within And Without The Underground Archipelago: A Personal Supervision Policy For Corroborant Inter-Action." A shortened version of that paper forms the basis of my "Critical Reflection of Self," (Chapter 4). In that chapter I document my initial attempts as a practitioner to reflect critically on meanings of instructional leadership even though I never specifically used that particular term in my original letter-essay.

In fact, I first remember hearing the term while I was writing my "Archipelago" paper. On December 3, 1987, I attended a curriculum seminar at the University of Alberta where a paper was presented by Dr. Pat Klinck, Associate Superintendent of Instructional Services for the Calgary Board of Education. She was disturbed by her school system's popular acceptance of the metaphor that "principals were [or should be] instructional leaders." As an alternative way of more realistically describing what administrators actually do and what they should do, she coined the slogan "moral arbiter." From her perspective, administrators are vested with powers which allowed them to judge what is valued within a particular school in ways similar to teachers arbitrating meanings of learning within a particular classroom. She wanted principals to recognize and reflect consciously upon the implicit morality of their daily decisions, indecision, and actions and

lack of actions with respect to creating meaningful experiences for each student in a school. Yet in order to make her argument clear, Klinck had to refute the name which her school division, and subsequently the Province of Alberta, were adopting as a job descriptor for principals.

I heard the term *instructional leadership* again, in January 1988, when I began an action research (Kemmis & McTaggart, 1982) project with Dale Ripley, an elementary school principal. Like Klinck, Ripley was also concerned about what this new administrative term meant and how it applied to his particular teaching and leadership style. At this point I began to regard instructional leadership as a cultural password for talking with administrators about education. Ripley and I decided that if we wanted to become conversant with current jargon, then we needed to know how prominent educators and researchers were defining instructional leadership.

Even after I began working on the literature review, I still viewed myself as an outsider to the culture of administrators and did not believe that Ripley's concerns for understanding an administrative term related directly to me as a teacher. Ripley's question became mine as I began to discover that problems described in my review of literature were interrelated to my own critical reflections about my practices as a teacher and to the difficulties of effectively interacting with teachers in any context. I started to realize that understanding definitions of instructional leadership had theoretical and practical implications not only for a particular action research project but also for improving my supervision of university student teachers and for my planned return to the secondary classroom as a teacher. The admission that the meanings of instructional leadership connected with my reflections about my teaching past, related to my acts of teaching in the present, and suggested possibilities for my teaching future gave me an existential reason (a Nietzschean "*why*") for studying the term: I could add a teacher's interpretation of instructional leadership, a point of view which I have not found my literature review.

I hope that readers of this work may, likewise, find their own personal/public reasons for *how* my *quest-ioning* of instructional leadership relates to their own particular

educational situations and to the broader public enunciations and mandates for embodying meanings of instructional leadership. Understanding the priority of asking questions is more than recreating someone else's meaning. Gadamer (1975) explains that asking "opens up possibilities of meaning and thus what is meaningful passes into one's own thinking on the subject" (p. 338). In extending an invitation for readers to find individual and social *why's* for studying this work, I would add that *educate*, which is derived from the Latin stem *educare* and means "to rear" or "bring up," is also related to the Latin root *educere* (from the word *educe*), which means "to lead forth" (The Oxford English Dictionary [OED], 1989, Vol. 5, p. 73). *Education*, it seems, originally denoted a rearing of children that also connoted *leading*. When seen in this light, an inquiry of instructional leadership may simply be an unveiling of hidden possibilities for *why* and *how* modern educators can "lead forth" with more care in their associations with children and adults.

The Framing Question

> *"These are only hints and guesses, hints followed by guesses; and the rest is prayer, observance, discipline, thought and action. The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation." (Eliot, 1959, p. 844, ["The Dry Salvages"])*

A difficult part of writing this dissertation involved uncovering a question which opened possibilities for interpreting meanings of instructional leadership. Although my introduction announced that I would question meanings--search for the differences between personal and public definitions--something did not seem to work each time I simply asked "What is the meaning of instructional leadership?" Whenever I posed that particular question, I kept coming up with answers: concluding that "a particular action, person, or text is 'the' solution." Somehow definitive answers repeatedly emerged as that which was most important. My question did not seem capable of taking on a life of its own for opening ongoing inquiry.

To frame a different way of posing my question, I performed what likely appears as an illogical arabesque: I postulated that questioning meanings of refrigerators related, in some ways, to opening up a questioning of instructional leadership. In my frustration to frame an enlivening question, I happened to go upstairs to retrieve a snack from the

refrigerator. As I did so, I remembered that in Arthur Miller's (1967) Death of a Salesman Willy Loman repeatedly questioned how manufacturers were able to "time" products like refrigerators to break down as soon as the final payment had been made. A machine became less of an object and more of an uncovered symbol for what was wrong with the world: everything, including Willy's life, was breaking down.

Since my refrigerator was not broken, the theme of entropy did not materialize as strongly for me, although I knew that mechanical failure is an ever-present possibility for all machines. At that particular moment, however, I mused less fatalistic personal meanings for my cooling machine: a bulletin board for family messages, a place to play with magnets, something to avoid opening after supper, a storage place for forgotten leftovers locked in sour cream containers, an emblem of daily physical and emotional sustenance, a heated frigidity. It seemed easier to poeticize meanings about a frigid thing than to heat up the meanings of an educational abstraction.

As I considered what was important about two different interpretations of refrigerators, I perceived that the ability to continue questioning for both individual and collective meanings allowed a technical device to provoke my thoughts. I conjectured that my generalizations about instructional leadership also needed to invite both personal and public questioning in order to invigorate ongoing thinking. Heidegger (1977) drew a similar conclusion when he explained the importance of seeking an understanding of the relationships between "building," "thinking," and "dwelling":

> Building and thinking are...insufficient for dwelling so long as each busies itself with its own affairs in separation instead of listening to one another. They are able to listen if both--building and thinking--belong to dwelling, if they remain within their limits and realize that the one as much as the other comes from the workshop of long experience and incessant practice. (p. 338-339)

For reflecting upon built things Heidegger cites bridges and houses, but in a world where the people are more frequently the consumers of housing packages filled with manufactured devices, I find a refrigerator an object worthy of contemplation for a common low man. Regardless of the grandeur or ordinariness of "built" or conceptual examples, the challenge of phrasing thoughtful questioning remains not to separate the

concrete from the abstract or the personal from the communal but to find ways of allowing different experiences to listen to each other as a means for sustaining thinking about dwelling upon an earth moving through spaces of both predictable and unknown possibilities.

In searching for a method of questioning which would allow an abstract term to interface with concrete experiences, I reminded myself that my title repeatedly served as a guiding bulletin board from the earliest stages of my inquiry. I had literally spent months choosing and revising each word and punctuation mark after trying out hundreds of combinations. But I had forgotten the power locked inside *incarnate*, a word which I had been trying to follow in nearly every one of my titles. T. S. Eliot was the first author who introduced me to the mystery of the noun *incarnation* in his poem "Dry Salvages": "The hint half guessed, the gift half understood, is Incarnation" (Eliot, p. 844). As I reflected further upon my title, I noted that it asked for plural *meanings*, not singular. I also had used both the prepositions *of* and *for*, and I began playing with the different connotations they had upon the phrasing of the question. Finally, I was able to put together an intricate question that enticed wondering about the "flesh and blood" meanings of a popularized slogan: *"What are the meanings of and for instructional leadership incarnate?"*

When I asked myself this question, I found that I could not easily think of particular or commonplace answers. I asked a neighbor, and he replied by asking me to explain the meaning of *incarnate*. We looked the word up in the dictionary and discussed some of the images the word began to take for us. At least my question stimulated further questioning and wondering about meaning. I tried the question on an expert in the field of supervision and was well acquainted with literature on instructional leadership. His response was a long pause followed with a question that he was not sure what I was asking. My question did not immediately provoke an answer according to his opinions or what the literature was saying on the subject. Instead, whether an individual was familiar with the word *incarnate* or not, it seemed to connote a sense of mystery and even awe. I

had discovered my question again. I had been asking parts of the question for months but had never consciously begun to realize its potential.

Asking "What are the meanings of and for instructional leadership incarnate?" implies a legion of intricate implications. Let me explain how the wording of the question playfully energizes my thinking. It begins with *what*, an interrogative which signals a different direction than *who* or *how* because it seeks to name the presences and absences which make up that which is other than conscious and unconscious streams of thought. It is also a pronoun which can be either singular or plural; in questions beginning with *what*, the noun which follows the verb determines grammatical number for subject/verb agreement (Perrin, 1965). If I used this interrogative pronoun in the singular sense, I would be purporting to define "the essence" of instructional leadership. Since I have chosen to search for meanings, the interrogatively plural *what* signals my intent to become reflectively cognizant of complex inter-woven relationships and possibilities.

The *are*, a present/plural conjugation of the often unnoticed yet potentially most powerful verb *to be*, connotes a state of existence or *being*. It reminds me that the question of *being/Being* is the central task of Heideggerian (1960) hermeneutics. As Barrett (1958) explains Heidegger's meanings for *being/Being*: *being* implies "the things that already are" and *Being* suggests "the to-be of whatever is" (p. 212). Grammatically, *are* locates the question in the time of the present, but since the present is always receding into antiquity, it also implies the necessity of historical inquiry of the past in order to understand the possibilities for the future. When used as the sole verb, a *to be* verb also signals that essential relationships between unlike things (metaphors) will be sought. In attempting to describe how one thing is like another, it is also vital to search continually for how one thing is *not* something else. Gadamer (1975) maintains that "The thing itself is known only through the counter-instances, only when the counter-arguments are seen to be incorrect" (p. 328). In this sense, a questioning of "what is" includes a determination of "what is not." For me, the plural *are* emphasizes the importance of looking at joining oppositions, and it symbolizes the dialectical nature of questioning for knowledge.

Although the article *the* at first appears to be unimportant, it can signify attempts for correctness. Instead of just asking about "meanings," the question can take on a different sense if read as a search for "the" meanings. One almost has to say the sentence aloud in order hear how emphasizing the inflection on *the* can direct the questioning toward an understanding of what are moral meanings. Concerning "research as a mode of practice," Carson (1986) has explained that, "moral content is immanent to the questioning itself and not added on in the application to practice" (p. 78). The search for "the" meanings of instructional leadership attempts to acknowledge the moralities which pervade the will of any question for educational reform.

The word *meanings* (a plural noun) acts as the controlling subject of the question. It denotes: intention, "that which is intended to be or actually is expressed" through language by a speaker or writer, a symbol, an action; in general use, the "significance" (OED, vol. 9, p. 522). This dictionary definition suggests that an understanding of *meanings* should be a search for the preconceived, sensible purposes of authors' words, signs, or actions. It helps me, however, to note that when Heidegger (1960) structured his questioning of *meaning*, he used the German noun *Sinn* (p. 4-5 [which is capitalized because all German nouns are capitalized]). According to the Duden Stilwoerterbuch (Grebe, 1963), *Sinn* denotes: (1) "Wahrnehmungs-faehigkeit" [perceptivity]," (2) "Bewusstsein" [consciousness], (3) "Empfaenglichkeit, Verstaendnis, Sinnesart" [susceptibility, understanding, temperament], (4) "Denken, Gedanken" [thinking, thoughtfulness] (5) "Bedeutung, geistiger Gehalt" [meaning, intellectual capacity] (pp. 558-559). My literal translations ([from] Klatt, 1967) of *Sinn* are attempts to demonstrate some of the German connotations which Heidegger may have had in mind when he wrote the words "der Sinn von Sein" (1960, p. 5), "the meaning of being" (1977, p. 45). The German definitions of *Sinn* suggest that a questioning of *meaning* should be more a question of sense (perceptivity), awareness (consciousness), and thoughtful understanding.

My attempts to relate *Sinn* to *meaning* also indicate some of the difficulties of translating languages. According to Gadamer (1967), the challenge of the translator is not

to strive for exactness but to open up directions of meaning which can carry the translated *saying ("Sagen")* over to the *said ("Sagende")* of the translated language (p. 100). In order to open and extend English conversation and thinking beyond mean, mindful meanings common to English definitions of *meaning*, I need to argue for hermeneutic senses of understanding *meaning*. Carson explains this kind of thoughtful awareness: "To understand means that what is understood has a claim on us, we appropriate the meaning to our own thoughts and actions in some way" (Carson, p. 82). My use of *meanings* is, in one sense, a signal of an individual (personal) and joint (public) search to appropriate and apply intentions of understanding. *Meaning*, then, is not only seeking to understand authors expressing an unchanging intention but involves readers continually interpreting their perceptions of *meanings* of words in relation to each reader's lived experiences.

The appropriation and application of *meanings* is not, however, just a problem of translation: it is inherent in all interpretation of conversation (*the saying*) or written or memorized texts (*the said*). Tyler (1978) describes the complexity by explaining how the concept of the "unsaid" relates to the "saying" and the "said":

> Every act of saying is a momentary intersection of the "said" and the "unsaid." Because it is surrounded by an aureola of the unsaid, an utterance speaks of more than it says, mediates between past and future, transcends the speaker's conscious thought, passes beyond manipulative control, and creates in the mind of the hearer worlds unanticipated. From within the infinity of the "unsaid," the speaker and the hearer, by a joint act of will, bring into being what was "said." (p. 459)

Tyler's point is that both the speaker and the hearer of words are actively involved in the creation and interpretation of *meaning*. There is never just one ultimate meaning: "[meaning] abounds instead in the resonating silence of the unsaid--in that possibility of all meaning" (Tyler, p. 465). In the framing of my question, I hope to encourage unsaid and unread possibilities of *meanings*.

How I intend to search for *meanings* is indicated by the function words *of* and *for*. The conjunction *and* acts a linguistic hyphen which both separates and joins the directions signified by each preposition. To attempt to understand the meanings *of* words

and related phenomena directs my questioning "to the things themselves," toward the discipline of phenomenology: "Science 'of' the phenomena means that it grasps its object in *such* a way that everything about them to be discussed must be directly indicated and directly demonstrated" (Heidegger, 1977, pp. 82-83). In the case of instructional leadership, attention must be given to the words themselves and to the implications they have had, are having, and may have upon the lives of all those involved in educational processes. And in the search for lived essences of meanings, the primary emphasis should not focus just on what *actually* was or is, but also on what are the *possibilities*: "Higher than actuality stands *possibility*" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 87).

It is in respect to future possibilities that I find *of* to be an impoverished English preposition. It is helpful to note that *of* is derived from the Sanskrit *apa*, meaning "away, away from," a sense which is now obsolete except "in so far as it is retained under the spelling *off*" (OED, vol. 10, p. 711). In the original Sanskrit sense, the questioning *of* meanings could readily connote the importance of learning *from* "the things themselves," yet it could also remind to take *away* new ways of thinking and acting. A similar sense is present in German: where the dative preposition *von* commonly signifies *from* as well as *of* (Sparks & Vail, 1967, pp. 93-94). Additionally, Heidegger frequently combines his use of *von* with the German preposition *nach*, which means "toward" or "after" (Sparks & Vail, p. 92), when framing the question of the meaning of Being: "Nach dem Sinn von Sein soll die Frage *gestellt* werden" (p. 5). Unfortunately, the English translation of this same sentence by Stambaugh and Gray omits the sense of searching "toward" the meaning of Being which is suggested by Heidegger's use of *nach*: "The meaning of Being is the question to be formulated" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 45). My use of *of* in my question symbolizes the importance of retrieving intended meanings, learning *from* reflective analysis. In order to suggest the *away* and *toward* possibilities of meanings, I have opted to include the preposition *for* in my question.

Admittedly, *for* is not a literal translation of the Sanskrit (*apa*) or German (*nach*) prepositions, but *for* leads toward different possibilities of questioning meanings.

Etymologically, *for* is derived from the Latin roots *prae* [which signifies "before"], *pro* ["for, ahead"], and *per* ["through"]; and the substantive meaning of the Old English *for* is related to the modern German *fuhre*, which means "to go" (OED, Vol. 6, pp. 41-42). These historical senses still reside in several of the modern definitions of *for*: "before"; "of purpose or destination"; "of duration and extension"; "of representation, substitution or exchange"; (OED, Vol. 6, pp. 23-26). Both the etymologies and sense divisions suggest that a questioning *for* meanings will need to understand what has gone on before as humans move ahead toward unknown destinations and relations with others. Consequently, to me, *for* is able to connote in English a fuller linguistic sense of Heidegger's "circular Being of Dasein whose *kinesis* takes the form of an existential circulation" (Caputo, 1987, p. 60). The circular purpose of Heidegger's questioning of the meaning of Being is to restore the question of *Being* to its original difficulty; to re-interpret the past in order to begin to understand the present flux of life and to hint why and how to move toward possibilities *for* future Being.

A more linguistically profound justification of my use of *for*, however, is hinted at by the denotation "of representation, substitution, or exchange" (OED, Vol. 6, pp. 23-26). What this sense of *for* implies is the ethical responsibilities each human has in behalf of others. Levinas has written extensively about that which is "beyond essence" or "otherwise than being." Such phrases attempt to describe that humans have unsayable responsibilities for the welfare of others which transcend Husserl's phenomenological essences or Heidegger's questioning of the meaning of Being. One of the primary ways Levinas attempts to express that which is undefinable is through the phrase: "the-one-for-the-other" (p. 178). In the English translations of Levinas, *for* is the privileged preposition in signifying how to respond to others: "My responsibility for the other is the *for* of the relationship" (p. 100). Such responsibility transcends signification in language: "one-for-the-other signifies in giving, when giving offers not the superfluxion of the superfluous, but the bread taken from one's own mouth" (p. 77). By including *for* in my question, I am attempting to accept "vulnerability, exposure to outrage, to wounding,

passivity more passive than all patience" (p. 15). I hope to face the temporality of living-toward-death by acknowledging in words and actions that "here I am for the others" (p. 185).

The authorized, educational term in my question--*instructional leadership*--marries the meanings of two words. *Instructional* is derived from the Latin verb stem *instruere*, meaning "to build, erect, set up, set in order, prepare, furnish, furnish with information, teach," and as a substantive *instruction* is commonly defined as "the imparting of knowledge or skill," "information," "a making known to a person what he is required to do," "orders," (OED, Vol. 9, p. 1049). The adjectival *instructional* was first used at the beginning of the nineteenth century, and it denotes characteristics "pertaining to instruction or teaching; educational" or "conveying "information" (OED, Vol 9, p. 1050). The derivation and sense divisions of *instruction* and *instructional* suggest that structures of knowledge can be imparted to subordinates; meanings of teaching are deferred toward structural provisions that erect order. When applied to principals, *instructional* delimits their *leadership* to ordering educational information which teachers will be required to build upon.

Implicit in such a delimitation, though, are associations with closely related words. For example, the dictionary lists *educational* as a cross reference for *instructional*, and educators frequently use the words interchangeably (The Alberta Consortium for the Development of Leadership in Education; Duignan & Macpherson). But the words are not completely synonymous. *Educational* includes concerns for "systematic instruction," yet it also denotes "the whole course of scholastic instruction which a person has received" (OED, Vol. 5, p. 74). In a similar sense, *teaching*, another dictionary synonym, suggests more than "imparting knowledge"; it also means "the occupation or function of a teacher" and "that which is taught" (OED, Vol. 17, p. 690). *Instructional*, however, tends to confine *leadership* to narrower structures: that knowledge and skills about the nature of conveying knowledge can be passed down by principals.

But important absences, deferred meanings, also hide in this more restrictive

structuring of leading. One is how the administrative appropriation of *instructional* connotes that instruction can be isolated from curricula. Most educators have traditionally seen a need to combine instruction with curriculum: hence the educational field of study named "Curriculum and Instruction." The presence of *and* after *curriculum* suggests that an isolated, generic definition of what is *instructional* is likely too prohibiting. Such omissions need to be recognized. Cherryholmes attempts to account for what is missing by defining *instruction* as "the concrete provision of some opportunities to learn, to the exclusion of other opportunities" (p. 1). Cherryholmes' definition is interesting not only because it recognizes both "provisions" and "exclusions," but because he sees *instruction* as essentially "opportunities to learn." None of the cited dictionary meanings referred to *learning* as a word closely associated with "imparting" or "making known" or "conveying" information. Yet like *curriculum*, "to learn" questions the sense development implicit in *instruction*; leadership which instructs involves opportunities to learn something. A recognition of such omissions provides a more balanced openness for interpreting the provisions and exclusions of *instructional*.

Leadership is the privileged substantive of this conjoined term. Traditionally, leadership connotes influencing or controlling others in ways that "induce movement in the desired direction" (Osborn, Morris, & Conner, 1984, p. 360-361). The basis for such an interpretation is apparent in the etymology and sense divisions of *leadership*: the verb *lead* is derived from the Old English *lithan*, meaning "to go, travel"; when combined with the suffix *-ship*, it denotes "the dignity, office, or position of a leader; the action or influence necessary for the direction or organization of effort in a group undertaking" (OED, Vol. 7, p. 745, 750). Current views, expand meanings of *leadership* to "translating intention (compelling vision) into reality and sustaining it" (Bennis, 1983). The sense that a leader knows where to go, can communicate this vision, and is able to organize movements of others builds on traditional senses and identifies how *leadership* is currently conceptualized as "a process" of interrelated phases (Bennis & Nanus, 1985).

Implicit in these definitions are interactive drives for a "will to power" (Nietzsche,

1987). Leadership by "position" is *de jure*: by right of office; leadership by "capacity" is *de facto*: demonstrating power in actuality or competence (Common, 1985). In North American educational institutions the conventional *de jure* chain of command is associated with the positions of trustee, superintendent, central office staff, and the principal. Manifestations of *de facto* power entails changing combinations of central office or school staffs, teachers, parents, committees, students, and interest groups. Leadership which attempts to bridge institutional and grass roots sources of power "involves a variety of people and positions entering, playing a role in, and then withdrawing from the process" (The Alberta Consortium for the Development of Leadership in Education, p. 3). Consequently, a crucial aspect of *instructional leadership* is understanding that both *de jure* and *de facto* dimensions of *leadership* affect the concrete actions or inactions provided within instructional contexts.

The final word in my question--*incarnate*--challenges generalized definitions of instructional leadership. Derived from the Latin *incarnat-us*, which was common among fourth century Christian writers and means "made flesh," *incarnate* can function as either an adjective denoting "clothed or invested with flesh," "consisting of flesh," "flesh-coloured," or a verb denoting "to embody in flesh," "to put into, express or exhibit in concrete form," "to convert into flesh," (OED, Vol. 7, pp. 783-784). Although I have employed an adjectival usage, the atypical positioning of the qualifier after the modified noun creates a hyperbolic effect: "In the phrase *a devil incarnate*...the true meaning is often more or less lost sight of, and the adjective becomes nearly equal to 'out-and-out,' 'arrant'" (OED, Vol. 7, p. 783). Such syntax also allows me to play upon an archaic verb usage: "No, this my hand will rather the multitudinous seas incarnadine" (Shakespeare, 1968, p. 1197). By simultaneously functioning as an emphatic adjective yet also implying the meanings of a transitive verb, *incarnate* shifts emphasis away from defining abstract meanings of an educational concept toward expressing and fleshing out embodiments of instructional leadership.

Because *incarnate* often denotes the embodied human form, the first question that

I infer from it is "Who?" This interrogative pronoun, which unlike the explicit *what* at the beginning (the *alpha*) of my question, silently hides within the meaning of *incarnate*--forming a *what/who* marriage of inquiry. It points in the direction of the ontological, but not as a Cartesian assertion of "I think, therefore I am." Instead, I experience Kierkegaardian (1983) lyrics which faithfully plead for individual authenticity. I hear Nietzschean (1982) laughs and screams for a re-evaluation of valuing. I see Sartrean (1965, 1966) dramatizations for an unblinking humanism in which human beings choose themselves. I sense the purpose of Heidegger's (1960, 1977) quest to unconceal the meaning of the Being--an inquiry which extends beyond the dimension of *human being* to a searching for the possibilities of all *Being*. And most mysteriously, I face my accountability for others. The uncovered *who*, the *omega* of my question, enlivens my inquiry in a continual process of re-thinking all the preceding words within my question.

After finally articulating my one guiding question, I am forced to confront particular, practical "sites/sights/cites" (Jagodzinski, 1989a). For example, "*Who* can or should be studied and described?" I laboured with two principals because they are, by a *de jure* definition, "instructional leaders" and because they have also demonstrated *de facto* competencies for working effectively with teachers. I also studied with an experienced teacher who was designated as the Language Arts Coordinator at her school. Her *de jure* authority over teachers was different from that of a principal's; in order for her to involve other language arts teachers in an action research project, she needed to demonstrate *de facto* competencies with respect to a specific curriculum. Each of these choices brought me into contact with temporality and transcience. The questions of time ("When?") and place ("Where?") became embodied with the *who* being studied. Motivations ("Why's?") for each person involved in the study had to be found and articulated. And I needed to be concerned about ethics ("*How*?"): "How can I ethically analyze and interpret the lives and work of human beings?" The priority of my question--"What are the meanings of and for instructional leadership incarnate?"--frames both my methodological techniques and my orientation to question openly for an understanding of actualities.

possibilities, and responsibilities.

Limitations

TEACHER'S WARNING: *"If you don't stop spouting out those ridiculous puns, then I must ask you to leave this classroom."*

child's response: *"OH-PUN the door."*

It may seem ironic to entitle my work "Opening" yet attempt to limit myself to one question. My initial response is like that of the impudent child-punster: to claim that what is *o-pen* is also an *o* within a *pen*. Once the literal reading of the word is discarded, then it becomes a freer symbol. The *o*, by itself, can represent that which is eternal (the eternal round), or a boundary put around someone or something, or a cipher (except for programming computers). The *pen* can stand for an enclosure (a pigpen or corral), a prison (penitentiary), a writing instrument, and the actions of imprisoning or writing. The *-ing* is an adjective, noun, or present participle suffix which can also function as onomatopoeia for ringing bells or racing cars. The number of symbolic interpretations have suddenly become difficult to control. The point is that *opening*, when broken apart, can imply not only boundaries (limitations) but also nouns for apertures and verbs for perforating and foraminous adjectives.

For the purposes of maintaining some control of language and method, the limitations for this research are: (1) the literature review locates definitions of instructional leadership only in the field of educational studies; (2) related terms and themes (i. e. leadership qualities, educational improvement, teacher evaluation, teacher supervision) are reviewed as they emerge from instructional leadership literature and through my field experiences; (3) the field work involved three other experienced educators; (4) this dissertation is a written (penned) document.

Overview

"A journey of a thousand miles must begin with a single step." (Bartlett & Beck, 1968, p. 74 [Chinese proverb of Lao Tzu].)

In some ways this dissertation follows a standard format (Long): Chapter 1 begins with introduction of significance, the nature of the question, and limitations; Chapter 2

involves a literature review; Chapter 3 explicates the methodology. Although Chapters 4-6 aim at citing the findings, each chapter is written in a different style. Chapter 4 demonstrates intense critical reflection upon personal experiences. In Chapter 5, I do three things: I evaluate the ethics of collaborative authorship; I publish three examples of collaboratively authored articles; then, I personally revisit each co-authored text. Chapter 6 steps between the introduction, the literature review, the methodological limitations, the public and my personal reflections and tries to describe intensely personal vignettes of meanings for instructional leadership. Chapter 7 aims at expressing concluding personal/public hints of how to continue walking this earth with openness to the mysteries of being and becoming instructional leaders for others. Overall, each chapter or essay within a chapter records footprints of my quest to uncover meanings of instructional leadership and to lead forward further reflective *quest-ioning* of meanings for being and becoming wise leaders who instruct well.

CHAPTER 2

Searching For a Public/Personal Understanding of Naming

Forward

"Oh, be some other name!" (Shakespeare, 1968, p. 484, [Romeo and Juliet])

One of the primary purposes of this review of literature and personal experiences is to initiate a search to understand how things are named and how names take on meanings: how the "saying" and the "said" of language affects who humans are (Gadamer, 1967). One problem with a legal statement such as Alberta's new School Act (Minister of Education) is that its statements are made anonymously and appear to have no clear-cut beginning. They are published (becoming a part of the "said") by a government agency, and no author or group of authors steps forward to explain how they came to name the world as they did. To argue with the wording or interpretation of a lawful statement of bureaucratic authorship is like trying to debate a transcendent deity Who never answers Her mail and never involves others in meaningful conversations. One can send letters or phone, but in my experience, inquiries are channelled through a network of bureaucracies and messages disseminated by subordinates. It is difficult to achieve a sense "of we": two parties communicating (saying) with each other (Gadamer,1967). Foucault (1980) is one of the few authors who has tried to trace how a bureaucratic "genealogy of ideas" anonymously governs what can be said and what must remain unsaid:

> Discursive practices are not purely and simply ways of producing discourse. They are embodied in technical processes, in institutions, in patterns for general behavior, in forms for transmission and diffusion, and in pedagogical forms which, at once, impose and maintain them. (p. 200)

Foucault was concerned with how language is shaped and subsequently shapes institutions and people. As Shapiro (1981) puts it, Foucault reverses "the familiar notion that persons make statements, and says that statements make persons" (p. 141).

When applied to an arbitrary educational term such as *instructional leadership*, Foucault's argument reminds that historical, cultural, political, economic, educative and linguistic influences compete for power in defining who people are and what they can be. The evidence for how naming affects thinking is evident in the questions which children

ask as they awaken to the world around them and to the answers which adults give both to shape the schooling and to stop the thinking of children. This will to name ranges from learning to recognize and address others by their given names, to rehearsing societies' "banking system" (Freire) of names. If, however, new boundaries for naming and being named are to be opened, it is first necessary to gain some sense of how a text came to be what it is, to grasp what the present boundaries are, and to re-question how to shape and be shaped by language.

Interpretations

> *"It is no accident that an age of science has developed into an age of organization." (Whitehead, 1929, p. 103).*

Historical Interpretations

The earliest combination of the words "instructional" and "leader" which I could find was by Mackenzie and Corey (1954), who noted that the principal was viewed as "the instructional leader of his school" (p. 103). They wanted to accentuate the principal's ability and responsibility to supervise what was taught in schools. They were not, however, the first authors to struggle with role definitions for principals of schools.

In reviewing some historical perspectives about principals improving instruction, Cuban (1986) points out that the imagery of the principal as an "instructional supervisor," the principal teacher of a school, has been one of the long-standing career roles expected of school principals. He cites the Twelfth Annual Report of the Common Schools of Cincinnati (1841), the Seventeenth Annual Report of the St. Louis Board of Education (1871), Cubberly (1923b), and Morrison (1931) as delineations of supervisory assignments. Ellett (1987) also refers to Nutt's (1928) description of the principal's supervisory functions as a foundation for Cogan's (1973) models of "clinical supervision." Of the literature of the 1920's, Cuban asserts that the ideal principal was more of a "supervisor" than an "administrative bureaucrat" (p. 112).

The "bureaucratic image," also has a long history. According to Cuban, this image may be expressed as that of a "scientific manager" (Callahan, 1962) or as administrative, clerical, and maintenance duties (Boston School Committees' Annual Report, 1857;

McMurray, 1913; Cubberly, 1923a). The implication of Cuban's dichotomous classification--supervisor versus bureaucrat--is that the historical definition of principals' duties has vacillated between these dominating, public attitudes toward organizing the meanings of principalship.

Blumberg views the bifurcation as competition between scientific paradigms and the crafts of practice. From Blumberg's perspective, Strayer and Thorndike's (1913) Educational Administration: Quantitative Studies set the stage for applying statistical procedures to educational problems. Cubberly's (1923b) emphasis on the principal's supervisory roles was heavily influenced by scientific management techniques for improving schools, a trend which "became firmly entrenched and continues, particularly in the research universities, in unabated fashion" (Blumberg, p. 39-40). For example, in the decade of the 1970's, Walberg (1979) identified 2,700 articles which placed heavy emphasis on identifying the outcomes of effective practice and defining differences the characteristics of "effective" schools. Working from such a database, Brookover, Lezotte, Edmonds, Rutter, and Weber (1979), as well as a Phi Delta Kappan study (1980), concluded that the principal's leadership and attention to the quality of instruction were prominent characteristics of an "effective" school.

Blumberg, however, advocates the need for research which studies principals "from their perch" (p. 42). He believes that the use of Schon's (1983) The Reflective Practitioner can serve as a model for understanding and explaining what principals actually do. Blumberg implies that an alternative paradigm for studying and improving the craftwork of principals, and hence schools, is in the early stages of development.

Greenfield's (1987) historical review emphasizes the themes of leadership and improvement. He notes that while not using the words "instructional leadership," a hope for how to improve schools is expressed through Cubberly's (1929) assertion that "as is the principal, so is the school" (p. 294). Greenfield explains that "the twofold theme of instructional leadership and school improvement has a long history among public educators, and that this idea is as potent today as in the 1920's" (p. 57). He concludes that

the possibility of "effective schools" can be achieved only if research goes beyond slogans and exhortations and examines the actual work of principals. Like Blumberg, Greenfield believes that a new, reflective way of studying and improving the old hopes and problems is now emerging.

Bates sees instructional leadership as an "ideological" development which is designed to reduce the autonomy of teachers and to increase "managerial" and "psychological" control over curriculum, evaluation, and pedagogy. His interpretation of history asserts that management systems for technically controlling production on the assembly line, based on Weber's (1978) warnings against bureaucratic rationality, led to political structures for schools that "depend upon the social construction of leadership as a form of managerialism and of instruction as a production process" (Bates, 1986, pp. 5-6). The mass socialization of unskilled teachers could be controlled through task-specific curriculum and managerial rule specification. Like Blumberg, Bates sees the testing movement, which Strayer and Thorndike inspired, as a "psychological control" for scientifically identifying various kinds of talents and predicting social and economic destinies.

According to Bates, however, psychological control could not keep up with the transformations occurring in society. As a result, a type of ideological control emerged which equated good teaching with knowing the newest curriculum techniques. Such manipulation is creating a "status panic among teachers" as they attempt to be skilled in the latest instructional models which have been determined to be "more effective" (pp. 13-

. Bates warns:

> Such developments are likely to lead both to an increasing emphasis on the logic of bureaucratic rationality and to further restrictions on the autonomy of the teaching profession.... Moreover, such developments are certain to further develop a technical notion of educational practice which is devoted to managerial rather than educational ends. (p. 14)

As an alternative to ideological/psychological/managerial domination, Bates hopes for a recovery of education as a "social and moral activity" that involves a "conflictual web of inter-relationships" (p. 14).

This brief history of public expectations, scientific procedures, emergent methodologies, thematic hopes, and critique of ideologies provides a background for illuminating some of the complexities involved in explaining the meanings of instructional leadership. Greenfield concludes that instructional leadership is very difficult to define:

> Despite its attractiveness as a slogan guiding the efforts of reformists, instructional leadership is an elusive concept and offers little guidance about the actual nature of leadership in schools. (p. 75)

The "attractiveness," or appeal, of the words lies partly in the subconscious imagery suggested by instructional leadership. The public has believed for quite some time that the principal of a school can make a difference in the quality of education, and people want to continue to believe in this common expectation even though researchers find it difficult to show a causal relationship between the efforts of principals and the accomplishments of teachers and students (Flath, 1989; Hallinger & Murphy, 1987; Murphy, Hallinger, & Mitman, 1983; Purkey & Smith, 1983; Rowan, Bossert, & Dwyer, 1983).

Expressing this hope in the form of a "slogan" evokes the theme of easy improvement, but as Murphy (1987) points out, this is an "oversimplified" and "oversold" hope which contrasts with the complexity of actually reforming school systems. The juxtaposition of an "elusive concept" attempting to guide the "actual nature" of schools illustrates the key problem of interrelating theory and practice. One group of educators (inspired by Thorndike) advocated that practical problems could be scientifically managed; another emerging group (influenced by Schon) purports that more reflection on practice is needed; critical theorists (such as Bates) question the ideological presuppositions manipulating every socio-historical or theoretical context. These opposing ways of looking at the world result in quite different definitions for bringing instructional leadership into practice.

An Interpretation of Practice

George Thoms, an experienced principal, described some of the problems which he discovered in trying to understand and achieve instructional leadership. He attended

three training workshops on instructional leadership and received three definitions. His overall impressions were:

1. The Principals' Center at Harvard University portrayed the principal as an "effective schools" instructional leader: an individual concerned about academics, a wisdom-seeker who is systematically engaged with observation and supervision of instruction. Thoms concluded that such instructional leaders did not exist; they were "bigger than life."

2. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) at George Mason University emphasized problem analysis, judgment, organizational ability, decisiveness, ability to get others involved, sensitivity, endurance of stress, communication, broad range of interests, and the principal being a role model of quality instruction as the traits an instructional leader should possess. The NASSP prescriptions made Thoms "feel guilty" for what he was not doing.

3. The Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development at San Francisco claimed that instructional leadership accrues through routine activities that are connected to principals' overarching perspective of their organizations and of their students' needs. The image of an instructional leader varies according to the context, pressures, and community pressures. Principals can improve by reviewing case studies and by learning to reflect on their actions individually and with peers and to communicate their vision with students, teachers, and community. After this workshop, Thoms believed that he was already practicing many aspects of instructional leadership. (pp. 196-200)

Thoms' feelings of hopelessness, guilt, and confidence indicate the emotional range which these models can cause an individual principal to experience, and they provoked me to wonder what instructional leadership means in practice: what should principals feel about themselves and their relationships with teachers and children; who can be instructional leaders; what qualities do they need to embody in their actions; why should educators want to read citations about instructional leadership and become such; where, when, and how should inservice on the practice of instructional leadership take place in order to help school personnel see what instructional leadership at a particular school site? As I reflect on such questions as these, Thoms succinctly summarizes the variety and complexity of popular inservice approaches to instructional leadership, and he symbolizes the ongoing need to question the advantages and limitations for framing any practical model.

An Effective Schools' Definition. Of the three designs Thoms describes, I found that the "effective schools" approach offered the most consistent definition. McGee

defines the effective principal as one who emphasizes "improving student achievement," "sets clear goals and objectives," and "systematically demonstrates concerns about teachers by working with them to improve instructional strategies" (pp. 36-37). This explanation corroborates Thoms' impressions as well as definitions by Achilles, Barth, Davis and Nicklos, Ellis, Kroeze, Peterson (1986), and Peterson (1987). The sets of specified behaviors may vary somewhat from one author to the next, but all share a similar vision of an instructional leader.

A NASSP Definition. The NASSP Assessment Center was established in 1975 for the purpose of helping school districts identify and develop highly skilled school leadership training programs (Lambert, 1987). Leadership is defined as the ability to get others involved in solving problems, the ability to recognize when a group requires direction, and to interact effectively with a group in guiding them to accomplish a task, and focussing on the development of instructional skills (Kelley & Wendel, 1983). Doggett lists (1987) eight leadership behaviors related to the assessment centre's definition:

1. Encourages teacher discussion about good teaching practice.
2. Involves teachers in developing and evaluating yearly staff objectives.
3. Exhibits knowledge of learning theory, instructional methods, and research.
4. Sets high priority on student discipline and behavior.
5. Makes expectations of self, teachers, and students high but attainable.
6. Observes classes and is visible to staff and students.
7. Facilitates positive reinforcement among teachers and students.
8. Advocates change via school-wide projects. (pp. 1-8)

The NASSP definition of instructional leadership closely reflects the kind of leadership outlined in "effective schools" literature: improved academics, goal-setting, systematic observation, and staff development. This suggests that the two approaches are related. One of the major differences between the two definitions is indicated in the expectations suggested by Doggett's third behavior. The concept that principals should "exhibit" the traits of a master teacher and still live up to the myriad of other recommendations and

duties assigned to principals is what caused Thoms to feel guilty about his performance as a principal after the NASSP training sessions. He felt overwhelmed by an ideology that everything should lean on the principal. For Thoms, both the effective schools and NASSP theories of how instructional leaders should improve schools were too idealistic to be practical.

A Reflective Definition. Thoms had a positive attitude toward a more reflective approach to bringing about instructional leadership. According to the Far West Laboratories' rationale, instructional leadership "accrues from repetition of routine and mundane acts performed in accord with a principal's overarching perspective on schooling" (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert, p. 66). Manasse (1986) claims that such leadership is explained not so much from what principals do but "how they think about what they do, how they communicate what they think, and what they 'do' while they are doing it" (p. 153-154). A uniform description of instructional leadership is not possible. In contrast to listing specific behaviors that result in "effective leadership," Dwyer (1986b) suggests five generalizations about successful principals:

1. Act with purpose--vision.
2. Have a multifaceted image of schools.
3. Use routine behaviors to progress toward incremental goals.
4. Engage in communicative behaviors.
5. Vary actions to suit routines, contexts, and purposes. (p. 15)

According to this formula, principals need to define leadership in ways consistent with their own personalities and communities. The key difference between this approach to leadership and the previous two is the attempt to emphasize the importance of how individuals think about leadership in their respective communities.

The "effective schools" and "NASSP" definitions are backed by established training programs which are based primarily on behavioral approaches to education. They are the definitions which most principals are likely to encounter in some form in the field. The reflective definition suggests a way of re-thinking approaches to leadership. But how will

these current models, or others being developed, actually affect principals, teachers, and children in schools that mandate the provision of instructional leadership? To open my understanding, I need to dialogue with some of the directions and implications involved with putting tenets of instructional leadership into practice.

Interpreting Efforts to Practice Instructional Leadership

> *"...we have shifted from a culture of representations to one of simulacra." (Lather, 1987, p. 15)*

Regardless of how instructional leadership is theoretically defined, the question of how the idea of such leadership is translated into practice appears to be a central issue which any definition must address. For this part of the literature review, I will describe three approaches to bring about instructional leadership in school settings (an effective schools assessment program in Southern states, a reflective program in Western states, and an educational leadership program in Australia). I will also review some socio-historical and linguistic perspectives of the concept. Seeing what is happening at a variety of sites and how various authors cite what they see happening will add more flesh to the simulacra of strategies, "copies without originals" (Lather), being promulgated as ways to practice the ideal of instructional leadership.

Dialogue with a Generic Teacher Evaluation Model

The model. The teacher assessment programs in Georgia, Florida, and Mississippi are significant for several reasons. One is the fact that Georgia was the first state to legislate a performance-based teacher certification model for beginning teachers: Teacher Performance Assessment Instruments (TPAI) (Capie, Anderson, Johnson, & Ellett, 1980; Capie & Ellett, 1982). Another is the number of teachers who have been affected by the adoption and adaptation of TPAI: the Teacher Assessment and Development System (TADS) involves over 13,000 teachers in Dade County Public Schools of Florida (Performance Assessment Systems, 1983, 1984), and in 1984 the state of Mississippi adopted the TPAI assessment process as the primary method of meeting the teacher evaluation requirements of the Mississippi Education Reform Act of 1982 (Ellett, p. 310). A third reason is TPAI and TADS followed factors deemed critical for implementation:

1. Top-level leadership and institutional resources for the evaluation process.
2. Evaluator expertise.
3. Administrator-teacher collaboration to develop a common understanding of teacher evaluation goals and purposes.
4. Compatibility with district overall goals and organizational context. (Wise, Darling-Hammond, McLaughlin, & Bernstein, 1984, p. 78)

Both TPAI and TADS claim that principals can successfully combine the responsibilities of formative evaluation (helping and supporting instructional improvement) and summative evaluation (certification of new teachers, yearly determination of acceptable teaching performance, and merit pay for master teacher designations). This combination of formative and summative evaluation duties is partly justified by the identification of generic teaching competencies: these are skills which research on "effective teaching" has identified as applicable to all teaching contexts (Peterson & Walberg, 1979; Smith, 1983). TPAI identifies 14 teaching competencies, while TADS designates 19 performance indicators. Examples of TPAI competencies are: "manages classroom interactions," "provides feedback to learners about their behavior," "maintains appropriate classroom behavior"; TADS indicators are: "matches instruction to learners," "attends to routine tasks effectively," and "demonstrates warmth and friendliness" (Ellett, pp. 307-313). The observer rates TPAI competencies on a scale from one to five, with a set of descriptors describing each rating; the TADS observer rates performance indicators as acceptable or unacceptable for 82 teaching behaviors. Thus, the concept of generic teaching skills attempts to frame what kinds of data an observer collects and measures.

The training of the observer in the use of the observation instruments and in the practice of supervisory skills is the second procedure which, according to the developers of the Teacher Performance Assessment Instruments (TPAI) and Teacher Assessment and Development System (TADS), warrants the merging of formative and summative evaluation. Each observer is required to complete a four or five-day comprehensive training program, including proficiency checks. Designates of the teachers' union receive

a two-day training session. In Dade County Public Schools observations may be announced or unannounced; teachers are required to present a written lesson plan; and observations must be for at least 30 minutes, although observation of the entire class period is typical. Teachers being considered for merit pay are not required to submit a written lesson plan, but they must be observed at least twice.

Advantages. Ellett maintains that typical models of clinical supervision (Cogan, 1973; Acheson & Gall, 1980) have been "expanded" and "enhanced" to accommodate "newer technologies like the TPAI and TADS" (p. 320). In lieu of a formal pre-observation conference, teachers receive a "standardized multimedia orientation program" (p. 312) and a "pre-observation interview," which "usually requires only a minute or two," immediately prior to an observation (p. 320). Most observers use a blank notepad for making notes, although TPAI and TADS worksheets are available. "On-task behavior scans" are made every two or three minutes, and longer observations are recommended in order to observe such competencies as "lesson closure" and "changing group size for instruction" (p. 313). A "post-observation interview," which is "usually one or two minutes," occurs immediately after the lesson, and a "formal post-observation conference" is held, "if needed," to review the observer's "scores" of teachers' instruction on TPAI or TADS forms, to review the observer's written "summaries" from lesson notes, to set "performance improvement goals as needed," and to establish "appropriate resources and time-lines for assistance" (pp. 321-322).

The TPAI and TADS programs are significant simply because of the number of principals and teachers affected by the program: over 35,000 assessments of teaching have been made in the Dade County Public Schools, and approximately 1200 administrators have been certified as "proficient" in the use of the TADS system. In addition to the large sample studied, the types of conclusions which the authors claim for their programs are interesting:

1. Ninety-one percent of TADS administrators agreed that TADS could improve the quality of instruction if teachers and administrators worked cooperatively toward this goal.

2. Sixty-five percent of teachers agreed that TADS could improve the quality of instruction.

3. Ninety percent of administrators reported that they were willing to consider teacher input before scoring particular TADS items.

4. Almost without exception, both teachers and administrators believed TADS to be much more comprehensive, objective, and fair than the previous evaluation instrument.

5. Some administrators reported spending more than 200 hours per year on instructional supervision activity than in prior years.

6. The number of teachers who receive unacceptable annual evaluations is not appreciably above the number for prior years. This observation seems to suggest that the TADS is functioning as an effective supervision tool for teachers needing assistance during the school year.

7. Assessment programs like TPAI and TADS represent highly developed, transportable technologies that can be effectively adapted to fit the instructional supervision needs of most school systems. (Ellett, pp. 314-317)

Based on these conclusions, Ellett and the other developers of TPAI and TADS are boldly claiming instructional leadership essentially involves the school administrators learning to act as evaluators and assessors of teachers. Their evaluation instruments, training programs, and analytic reviews serve as their evidence of a practical and successful program of instructional leadership.

Personal concerns. Several things make me suspicious, however, about their work and their claims. First, they imply that the more teachers who are involved in a project, the more legitimacy it has. I can see where such thinking is financially beneficial for the developers of the program, but I am not so sure about the benefit for the principals and teachers in the school. As I read what Ellett and his colleagues had developed, I kept having flashes of *deja vu*. I had experienced something very similar to TADS and TPAI. My school system set in motion a program for "objectively" evaluating all the teachers in the division (National Iota Council, 1977). Administrators assumed that all teachers should be evaluated in the same way. I was one of the teachers who became intensely dissatisfied with the process, but the fact that I may have been only a minority of teachers who did not believe that a generalized evaluation program could "improve the quality of instruction" (35% of the teachers in the TADS study believed this), is not the most

important datum. Other important considerations are: on what basis did I object, and what did I suggest as alternatives for improving instruction and professional development. The TPAI and TADS developers appear to assume that because they had 65% teacher support and 90% principal support that the program was a success. I think that they need to more carefully consider the quality of the objections to their work.

Questioning conclusions. I also believe that a number of Ellett's conclusions invite *non sequitur* conclusions. What does it really mean to say that the TADS instrument is better than a previous instrument? Are knives and forks always better than chopsticks? It is impossible for me to judge how one tool is better than the previous tool without a more careful analysis of who, when, where, why, and how the previous instrument was used (or not used) upon teachers. Is it better that some administrators are now spending 200 hours more on supervision than previously? What actions and programs have been dropped in order to devote so much time to the TADS project? Also, why are principals spending so much time on this particular supervision program? Is this something that they want to do and believe is important, or is it something which they do because they are afraid "not" to do? Are they fearful that they might not be able to keep their jobs? In my own case, I know that when I fearfully obeyed the mandatory evaluation procedures executed by administrators, the quality of my instruction to my students deteriorated. Ellett overgeneralizes the effects of evaluation and supervision programs as a means for effecting instructional leadership.

Ellett needs to question his thinking about several issues. For instance, how much teacher "input/explanation" was expected or desired "before scoring particular TADS items"? What kinds of information was being conveyed to teachers by principals completing a score sheet of evaluation criteria? From my experiences, I remember that the principal and vice-principal energetically completed our school division's observation score sheets during the first year of our division supervision program, but by the second year this was no longer a process encouraged by either administrator. Both still filled out the observation forms, but the scoring sheet was generally perceived as not serving a

useful purpose. The conclusion which disturbs me most, though, is that Ellett and his associates have developed "transportable technologies" for successful surveillance of school systems. This attitude of knowing the answers, of controlling the technology and its language, ignores the importance of questioning how instruction can personally and contextually be improved. For me, such research epitomizes the need for re-thinking meanings of instructional leadership.

Dialogue with a Reflective Approach

The model. As a counterpoint to Ellett's technological programs, the Peer Assisted Leadership Program (PAL) attempts to use reflection as a professional growth activity (Barnett, 1987). PAL developers contend that many leadership models overestimate the effects of "planning, goal consensus, and school-level instructional objectives" as generic ways to improve the organizational structure of schools. Such approaches ignore the complex contradictions which are found in actual school contexts: such as instructional leadership versus teacher autonomy or how changes in the composition of the student body affect student assessment scores (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert, pp. 7-8). As an alternative way of viewing how principals influence schools, PAL researchers developed a multilevel framework which attempts to describe an "overarching perspective that many principals use to insure that their schools are healthy, productive settings for students and teachers" (Barnett, 1987, pp. 273-274). This framework claims that instructional management of routine communicative actions is a vital component of any definition of instructional leadership.

PAL actually developed from discovery grounded (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) ethnographic case studies which analyzed the qualities of highly rated principals. One of the initial findings from these case studies was that principals felt isolated and wanted communication with their peers as a way of understanding what they were doing and how to improve (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert; Barnett, 1985). The training involves six full-day meetings conducted by two trainers at intervals of about six weeks. The training content includes:

1. Review of the framework of instructional management. Each principal selects a partner for the field work between the training meetings.

2. Instruction in shadowing [detailed ethnographic observation of a principal's interactions] is provided with an emphasis on how to take accurate, descriptive field notes and how to assume a non-threatening role during shadows. PAL trainers expect each principal to conduct four shadows (lasting from three to four hours each).

3. Instruction is provided on how to form reflective interview questions based on the observations recorded during shadows. PAL trainers expect each principal to conduct four reflective interviews (each lasting an hour).

4. As the reflective interviewing unfolds, theme building is developed. Principals are taught how to ask questions that connect the various pieces of information they have obtained. The general framework serves as a tool for organizing the information, themes, and stories that emerge.

5. Data is clustered according to themes, and a preliminary model [miniature case study], based on the themes is proposed and critiqued by the observed principal and trainers.

6. A final model is developed which summarizes and combines the clustered theme data.

7. Participants orally present the written models to their partners. These models are compared and contrasted. Discussion also centers on the common issues that emerge from examining principals' leadership behavior. (Barnett, 1987, pp. 275-277)

As a result, the teams of principals can reach consensus about interpretations leadership and write mini-case studies of their observations of school situations. Barnett (1987) explains that some other effects of this kind of collaboration are "building trust and openness" among principals and "transferring reflection to the work setting" (pp. 278, 282). Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, and Bossert also conclude that an ironic value of the PAL framework is that it "raises more questions than it answers" (p. 8).

Advantages. PAL cannot claim the widespread employment that TPAI and TADS can. In 1983-84, approximately 30 principals from Sacramento and Salt Lake City participated in the program. In 1984-85 additional groups of 10-15 principals from Sacramento and San Francisco joined the work. In addition, some of the original group of principals from Sacramento continued to meet as a reflective support group, although shadowing and reflective interviewing were not used as extensively in the second year. Enrollments for 1986-87 were not provided, but Barnett (1987) believes that PAL can be

expanded for use with new principals, administrators, directors of curriculum, and vice-principals. PAL is significant because it is one of the first attempts of qualitative educational research to help principals systematically practice "reflection-in-action" (Schon, 1983) in their everyday decisions.

Personal concerns. Although my personal biases about educational research are more closely aligned to a "reflective" definition of instructional leadership, I have serious concerns about the PAL model. For instance, PAL advocates seem to assume that principals should intensively reflect only with other administrators. They do not advocate that principals reflect with teachers about what is happening in schools. Could the principal-to-principal approach to reflection further separate principals from teachers? If alienation of teachers does or is occurring, is the PAL leadership model distancing itself from instruction?

I ask these questions because, as a teacher, I have experienced alienation in observing and working with administrators. Not only did the power of the position get in the way, but also the ability to reflect about what was occurring in the school and what could occur. For instance, when a new principal was assigned to one of the high schools where I worked, this administrator began dropping hints at staff meetings, in the staff room, and in private conversations that he was very interested in starting an inter-grade "home room" program as a way of building a sense of community at our school. He quickly dropped the idea, though, after attending a leadership workshop with other principals. As they reflected on goals they had for their schools, he shared his "home room" idea, and several of the experienced administrators from schools in other cities and provinces proceeded to tell him why his plans would not work. For some reason, he believed them. When he returned to school, he still occasionally talked about the "home room" idea but more as a lament than a hope. As a teacher, I never really understood how and why his thinking had changed so dramatically; he never quickly believed me when I told him that something he was planning would not work. I felt then, and I still feel now, that he needed to continue the conversations and reflections with his staff of teachers

about the "home room" idea and the possibilities he foresaw in changing the school's sense of community through experiments with such a program.

Balancing actualities and possibilities. My greatest concern about the PAL model, however, is that the focus of reflection is toward a justification of "what is" and not toward a contemplation of the possibilities--of "what could be." Perhaps principals, such as Thoms, who have experienced a sense of hopeless guilt about their administrative roles, need to feel reinforced about the actions which they already *do* in schools. As a teacher who has also experienced guilt and a lack of recognition for my teaching services, I can certainly see a need to acknowledge services which individual principals provide for schools. The problem with broadening the definition of an educational term to include "routine communicative actions" is that it can be used to justify almost anything that "principals" already do but not to provoke reflection as the first step toward changing their own practice. Somehow a balance needs to be sought between explanation of "what is" and wonderment about "what could be." My present review of the PAL model does not indicate to me that sufficient attention is being paid to using reflection as a means for exploring possibilities of changing instructional practices.

Dialogue with an Approach Questioning Values

The model. A third approach, which is in its early phases, emphasizes the relationship of values to leadership. Duignan and Macpherson have formed the Educational Leadership Project (ELP) in Australia. This program seeks to answer the questions: "How should leaders in education decide what is important? How will leaders know that they are morally right when they act?" (p. 4). To help "educational leaders" deal with the dilemmas imposed by social, economic, managerial, and educational expectations, ELP advocates a practical theory for knowing how organizations function and understanding the implications of cultural norms.

The guiding principles of the ELP theory are: planning, creativity, systematic reflection, review of research, synthesis of research with practice, academic and practical goal-setting, granting teachers responsibility for their inservice education, helping

teachers develop tools that relate to their careers and world of work, and consistency between organizational and ethical assumptions (pp. 7-9). ELP projects are developed by teams of three practitioners and one academic specialist, who attempt to apply ELP theory to issues relevant to curriculum development, law, quality teaching, and the multicultural issues. Project findings are shared with other teachers through workshops, monographs, video scripts, and post-graduate learning materials. Educational leadership, according to the aims of ELP, is to develop and practice the "responsible use of power."

Advantages. Although this approach to leadership is only in its beginning phases, I have mentioned it for two reasons: first, the use of the adjective *educational* is important. Although some authors frequently use *instructional* and *educational* as synonyms, Duignan and Macpherson seem to see the latter term suggesting that leadership applies to a wider range of issues than to concrete actions (or inactions) of providing instruction. In Alberta, Klinck also found it necessary to find new words--"moral arbiter"--in order to re-direct thinking about the duties and responsibilities of principals. Researchers concerned about values seem to be indicating that the focus of instructional leadership may need changing, or it may need to be altogether dropped. I foresee that a questioning of the moralities locked behind a term such as instructional leadership is a fruitful area for further inquiry.

Dialogue with Socio-historical Perspectives

Power sites. The other reason why a values approach to leadership is significant is that it explicitly names the will for power as a keystone for understanding the architecture of leadership. For example, Mendez (1986) proposes that three major forces shape a school: the public, the staff, and the students. Each of these forces interact with the curriculum, and he sees the role of an instructional leader as steering the interacting forces in ways that improve the quality of instruction. But the myth that a school leader can manipulate what happens at school board rooms, at the central offices, around the school office, or inside school classrooms is not realistic. The constellation of power sites which influence educational decision-making is a larger enigma which looms behind much of the leadership literature.

A long-term case study. Dwyer and Smith (1987) provide a socio-historical perspective to the issues of leadership through their meta-case study analysis. Smith and Keith (1971) described a small mid-west, "open area" school, which they called Kensington Elementary, just after it was built in 1964. The study focused on the events which occurred during its first two years, and Smith and Keith heralded the school as "a unique blend of architecture, people, ideas, and pedagogy" (Dwyer & Smith, p. 156). An overview of Dwyer and Smith's findings follows:

> Returning to Kensington in 1979, researchers tracked down as many of the original staff as possible, and formulated a case study with a panorama of 15 years. They found that the first principal, whose vision, intellect, and personality had been such an important part of the first case study, had left the school at the end of the second year.
>
> The next principal was more traditional. Seventeen teachers resigned after he was assigned to the school, but this allowed the hiring of a new staff; the first interior walls were built in the school; the population of students supporting the school began to drastically change at the same time as this principal's health began to deteriorate.
>
> As a result of the death of the second principal, the third principal began his tenure in the middle of the school year. Walls for classrooms were built; discipline, transience, and learning disabilities were problems which plagued the school. When this principal's health began to decline, he held on until retirement.
>
> The last principal continued to struggle with the same problems of the previous principals. The school now had classrooms with walls and used traditional textbooks and traditional teaching approaches. In 1979 this principal was worried that he would be transferred, but he remained as principal until the school was closed in 1981; future renovations were not deemed to be cost effective because of the expense of removing asbestos insulation. (pp. 157-176)

A warning. After completing their study, Dwyer and Smith reached the following conclusions:

> Do leaders make a difference? and if so, how much? Our story indicates that Kensington's leaders influenced their organizations. In most instances, their effects appear dramatic when the school is viewed over a short span of time and as an entity unto itself. In all instances, however, any notion of strong, effective leadership erodes when a larger, longer perspective is taken. Kensington's leaders led within the limits defined by their contexts. None affected his larger context; instead, each was swept along by it. (p. 176)

According to Dwyer and Smith, this research represents a warning to educators and researchers: they need to be cautious about overemphasizing dramatic reforms and need to more critically view leadership in education for longer periods time.

Personal concerns. To me, however, it brings to mind deeper questions about education and leadership. For instance, why is it that two of the principals at Kensington found the job so onerous that they became ill? What does this say about the work of the principal? Personally, I am reminded of the sudden death of a young, overworked principal who was a colleague of mine. The problems of leading teachers and children in any school system are manifold and complex. Consequently, definitions of generic competencies, reflective observations, or power valuations need to acknowledge that people are imperfect beings who need to interact with each other compassionately.

Advantages and limitations of language. People also need to be reminded that language is not perfect: it is a critical trap for any attempts to relate a flow of actions to a pool of words. For instance, open definitions may appear to be too indefinite to be useful. Murphy (1987) points out that instructional leadership is "often ambiguously defined" or described in "global terms," adding that "references to the specific behaviors, skills, and practices that define the global indicators are difficult to locate" (p. 5). Contextually bound meanings are allowed, even encouraged, in open interpretations of educational or instructional leadership such as ELP's or PAL's. For example, what does being "morally right" or learning "the responsible use of power" really mean in ELP theory? I sense hidden political presuppositions undergirding the principles of ELP. Or in the case of PAL, how can taxpayers recognize "building trust and openness" or "transferring reflection to the work setting"? PAL could be used to justify managerial routines and allow principals to continue doing what they want and not to change.

But criticism of the language of definition is a two edged sword. Murphy's claim that specific definitions are difficult to locate implies that such definitions can be found if specified as behaviors, skills, and practices. According to this logic, an "effective schools" definition should provide greater clarity and precision. If so, how unambiguous are the TPAI and TADS? If I am being evaluated by TPAI or TAD's, do I (as teacher) and my principal (as evaluator) have the same understanding of the *teaching competency* "maintains appropriate classroom behavior" or the *performance indicator* "demonstrates

warmth and friendliness" (Ellett, 1987, pp. 321-322)? How can I, as an English teaching major, be really sure that even if I observe the Math 30 teacher "provide feedback to learners about their behavior" (Ellett, pp. 321-322) that the feedback is appropriate to the curriculum and meaningful to the students? I may also observe behaviors or skills or practices which are real and beneficial to students but are difficult to name. Should I avoid attempts to describe such acts or add them to the instruments of evaluation? One of the dangers of attempting to define instructional leadership as described behaviors or recipes of skills or names of practices is that such reductions may preclude the asking of more difficult questions for unnamed or ignored possibilities.

Understanding the values of windows and walls. If there is one lesson that has been reinforced as I have written this review of literature about instructional leadership, it is that even though answers may be ambiguous, educators need to keep asking critical questions for how to practically change. Sergiovanni (1987) describes the paradox in this manner:

> Models of leadership are much like windows and walls. As windows, they help expand our view of things, resolve issues that we face, provide us with answers, and give us that surer footing we need in order to function as researchers and practicing school administrators. But as walls, these same models serve to box us in, to blind us to other views of reality, other understandings, other alternatives...our vision is both increased and decreased at the same time. (p. vii)

Language is both a window and a wall. So are the cultures in which we live and our historical interpretations of ourselves and others. The danger of discovering life is replete with ambiguities is that we will concentrate on the walls. For example, Dwyer and Smith's 15 year case study seemed to end on a note of hopelessness: "None [of the principals] affected his larger context; instead, each was swept along by it" (p. 176). The fact that most of us are "swept along" by public demands upon us does not negate the importance of personally struggling to understand and care for ourselves and others as individuals.

Facing A Naming

> *"In the varied topography of professional practice, there is a high ground overlooking a swamp.... The practitioner must choose. Shall he remain on the high ground where he can solve relatively unimportant problems according to prevailing standards of rigor, or shall he descend to the swamp of important problems and nonrigorous inquiry?" (Schon, 1987, p. 3)*

The preceding literature review has allowed me to understand part of the genealogy of the term instructional leadership: I can now associate human names with theories of practice. An abstract concept is beginning to take on human personalities instead of a faceless legal decree. I also feel more confident in adding my own voice of penned words and pedagogical actions to the professional dialogues and the educational literature. I choose to continue my existential quests for meanings, not because I will be able to determine the primordial or everlasting essence of nomenclature, but because the essential fact of existence is problematic: humans need to keep trying to ask better questions for the possibilities of fleshing-out actualities which lurk within the swamp of human concerns.

CHAPTER 3

Re-entering the Quest of the Question:

A Collaborative/Corroborant Mode of Inquiry

Forward

> *"The reeds tell Psyche not to go near the rams during the daylight hours to get the wool--she would be immediately battered to death--but to go at dusk and take some of their wool that has been brushed off by the brambles and low-hanging boughs of a grove of trees that stand in the field and under which the rams often pass. There she will get enough of the golden fleece to satisfy Aphrodite without even attracting the attention of the rams." (Johnson, 1986, p. 53)*

As I explained in the Introduction, this work centers upon a *quest-ioning* of meanings for instructional leadership. In using a hyphen to emphasize the root word *quest*, I do not imply that my search will be like the murdering quest of Jason for the skin of the Golden Fleece; instead, I hope it will be more like the watching of Psyche for tiny bits of golden fleece that scrape off on problematic brambles. A quest in this more feminine sense is a continually evolving search that struggles to watch diligently and to open oneself to revealing encounters. To me, this means that my *quest-ioning* is not going to result in readily usable answers to be forced upon or sold to masses of people. Instead, I want others to quest for their own meaningful questions. The issue is not whether my particular question about instructional leadership is an authentic one for everyone else to ask; it is whether people are personally and publicly learning to ask their own authentic questions for meanings.

In contemplating the difficulties of this approach, I am inclined to re-phrase Husserl with my own slogan for working with educators: "to the beings themselves." The process of working with others in a process of *collaborative inquiry* requires that I learn to *share* other's questions with my own *selfish* ambitions. As long as I regard another's question as their concern, I am an outsider. As a collaborative inquirer part of my struggle is to become an *insider*, a person who personally cares about the questions others ask and who can interactively converse with them in what Gadamer (1967) describes as "the sphere of we" (p. 98). I am striving to understand the significance other's talents and

questions and to discover ways of working responsibly with them.

Admittedly, it is not always possible to enter the mind or culture of another: I will never know what it is like to be Black and live in a White Man's world because I am white; I will never really know the oppression women face because of my inherent patriarchal bigotry. But I can become an insider by discovering how the theoretical and practical problems of others affect my own quests for well-being. My quest, therefore, is to seek *selfish/shared* linkages for collaborative inquiry.

I am attempting to live between the dividing line of a *selfish/shared* slash. I cannot completely give up the driving power of my own question, nor can I force others to accept my question, nor is it easy to adopt someone else's question as my own (Smits, 1987). One of the key challenges I face in working with other educators is learning to "prevent the suppression of questions by dominant opinions" (Gadamer, 1975, p. 330). Instead of suppressive domination, I am searching for ways in which educators can respect differing opinions and still work together. In describing the cooperative aims of my methodology, I have co-opted the adjective *collaborative*. Etymologically, *collaborate* is derived from the Latin prefix *col*, meaning "together," and the root *laborare*, meaning to mean "to work" (OED, vol. 3, p. 469). When interpreted etymologically, *collaborative* simply means laboring together.

In recent educational literature, Carr and Kemmis (1986) have also appropriated *collaborative* in defining their methodology of "action research":

> The practice of collaborative educational action research envisages a social order characterized by rational communication, just and democratic decision-making, and fulfilling work. Moreover, it focuses the attention of participants on their own educational action with the intention of reforming it so that educational practices, understandings and situations are no longer marred by contradictions or distorted by ideology. (p. 200)

Their view of *collaborative* emphasizes the importance of educators working together on projects that change the order of society. I am attempting to build on the historical meanings of *collaborative* as well as the democratic vision of the "action research" definition.

Unlike Carr and Kemmis, however, I do not believe that a "social order" can be

created where contradictions and ideological distortions can be eliminated. I cite Nietzsche (1987) in rejecting hopes for creating a collaborative utopia:

> On no point, however, is the common European consciousness more reluctant to learn than it is here: everywhere one enthuses, even under scientific disguises, about coming states of society in which there will be "no more exploitation"--that sounds to my ears like promising a life in which there will be no organic functions. "Exploitation" does not pertain to a corrupt or imperfect or primitive society: it pertains to the *essence* of the living thing as a fundamental organic function, it is a consequence of the intrinsic will to power which is precisely the will to life. (p. 175)

The fact of daily life is that elimination of contradictions is not possible. Consequently, I do not seek confirmation of myself or of others, but reciprocal invigoration. Geertz (1973) more accurately describes my methodological hopes: "What gets better is the precision with which we vex each other" (p. 18).

As a way of characterizing the struggle to balance personal/public "wills to power" as a part of my methodology, I advocate the adjective *corroborant*, which means "strengthening, invigorating, especially of medicinal agents," and it is derived from the Latin word *corroborare*, meaning "to strengthen" (OED, vol 3, p. 968). It is closely related to the more commonly used word *corroborate*, but I have avoided *corroborate* because it frequently connotes agreement, a "yes" nodding of the head. *Corroborant* does not imply simple consensus; instead, it suggests occasionally coming together and sharing critical strengths. This type of interaction still functions among tribes (such as the Masai) who temporarily set aside territorial and political differences and meet with other groups in order to barter for services and goods that they cannot produce themselves. The same process is operant in modern society but is hidden behind symbols of money and illusions of independence. The hope of *corroborant collaboration* is temporarily to share abilities, territories, and questions with other educators for the purpose of reciprocally building up each other's strengths and nurturing critical questioning for ongoing quests of educating oneself and one's neighbors.

Guiding Public Principles For Field Work

> *"We open our eyes in the morning, and the world opens before us. We do not reflect enough on what happens in this simple act of seeing--namely, that the world opens around us as we see." (Barrett, p. 221)*

My field work with other teachers, which is delineated in Chapter 5, is partly built on "discovery grounded theory" (Glaser & Strauss). According to this anthropological approach to studying humans, the questions of the group being studied are decisive in understanding how a culture functions. For me, this means that my challenge is to open my eyes, ears, and other senses to discovering the issues which are significant to the school leaders with whom I work. The main problem I experienced in using "discovery grounded theory," however, is that it based upon an anthropological rationale which aims at understanding--not changing--a culture.

As a professional teacher, my concerns are not just to understand but to be involved in changing human behaviors. For this reason, I have chosen "action research" (Carr & Kemmis; Kemmis & McTaggart) as the primary educational methodology which initially organizes my work with other teachers. Because I have taught in a public school classroom for 12 years and since I have also spent the last five years reading a good deal of literature about research in education, I sense a need for educators at all levels to work together in developing alternatives for helping students learn. Unfortunately, the culture of many schools means that the act of teaching is conducted in isolation away from one's colleagues:

> Teachers in most schools have few opportunities to learn from each other or to engage in collegial interactions. For example, the average teacher has the opportunity to see a colleague teach less than once every three years. (Murphy, p. 3)

Action research outlines a model for building bridges between the teaching realities and educational theories.

Originally introduced by the social psychologist Lewin (1946), "action research" was conceived as a way to "join the experimental approaches of social science with contemporary social problems" (Carson & Couture, 1988, p. 2). It was not, however, until theorists such as Schwab (1969) began calling for more practical judgment in curriculum matters, Stenhouse's (1975) contributions to the teachers-as-researchers "movement," and Habermas's (1974) critical analysis of theory and practice that a foundation began to be

laid for a practical and critical action research approach (Carr & Kemmis; Kemmis & McTaggart). Consequently, the practice of action research has recently undergone a renaissance of theorizing.

As opposed to more traditional forms of educational research that encourage attempts at objective observation, the critical approach of action research advocates that action researchers get their hands dirty with the work of changing school practice. Carr and Kemmis explain: "The 'objects' of action research--the things that action researchers research--are their *own* practices, their understandings of these practices and the situations in which they practice" (p. 180). Action researchers investigate the day-to-day problems of teaching, and they act in reflective ways that will most likely lead to changing what actually happens at schools.

Next, action research is *democratic*. It encourages a much greater degree of interaction among colleagues, inviting an active collaboration in joint attempts to unfold alternative teaching practices. This notion can be one that school administrators, especially those accustomed to a top-down tradition, may find especially difficult. Shared ownership occurs only when all of the participants have equal rights regarding all of the decisions and responsibilities affecting a project, its results, and its operation. If ownership is successfully shared, collaborators are likely to have stronger commitments to learn together. If equal ownership is not realized, then the goal of action research is to involve the participants as much as possible in a continuum of sharing.

At its theoretical level, action research outlines a systematic, four-phase cycle: "planning," "acting," "observing," and "reflecting" (Kemmis & McTaggart). In the *planning* phase, the educators question what is happening, determine areas of educational practice which they want to change, and propose means to achieve future goals. In the *acting* stage, the collaborators put their plan into action, addressing some or all of a particular set of problems. During the *observing* aspect, the investigative team monitors the impact of their actions by collecting data pertaining to the results of their actions. The final phase of *reflecting* involves team members critically reviewing what has happened during their

project, developing a revised action plan based upon what they have learned from the previous three steps, and beginning the cycle all over again.

The key advantages I see to an action research approach are its emphasis on action and shared ownership. Each phase of the action research cycle is described with action verbs, which direct the action researcher to act upon educational problems in a systematic and practical way. It outlines "a deliberate process for emancipating practitioners from the often unseen constraints of assumptions, habit, precedent, coercion and ideology" (Carr & Kemmis, p. 192). Educators cooperatively learn to learn.

Personalizing Collaborative Inquiry

"...the successful marriage of theory with practice is consummated, in part, by learning the art of compromise." (Entwistle, 1988, p. 26)

Redefining a Framework

The main discrepancy which I have experienced in my attempts to carry out cycles of "planning," "acting," "observing," and "reflecting" is that each stage does not follow the other in a linear, orderly fashion. In fact, I found them not distinct at all. They were more like brief *moments* which occur so quickly that they are often smudged on top of each other. Consequently, I have found it necessary to personalize the Kemmis and McTaggart four-stage cycle as moments of a corroborant process which I prefer to call *collaborative inquiry*. I have outlined my re-definitions not because I want other educators to adopt my explanations but to illustrate how my personalizing of meanings allowed me to take ownership of a theoretical framework and to discipline my approach for working collaboratively with other educators.

Reflection. The personalizing process began when I challenged the call of Carr and Kemmis for a "self-critical community of action researchers" (p. 184). I saw Carr and Kemmis writing critically about the literature of education in general, but for me self-critical also implied intensive, critical reflection of self. Consequently, I viewed reflection as involving an ongoing critique of the self which extends to critical analyses of public domains. Thus, it is the first moment in my cycle of collaborative inquiry.

Initially, reflection was my only means to think about how to change my teaching.

As a graduate student who was not actively teaching others at the time, I could not "reflect-in-action" (Schon, 1983), which has become the more recognized style of reflection. Garman (1986c), however, describes a process called "reflection-through-recollection" as a reflective alternative which encourages the practitioner to recollect memories in order to change their actions as a professional educator.

I acted on Garman's suggestions for "reflection-through-recollection" and wrote a self-critical analysis which forms the basis for Chapter 4 of this dissertation. In it I question how I as a teacher could influence processes of teacher evaluation as they related to myself and to other teachers. I developed generalized principles which allowed me to become more involved with evaluation of instruction and the professional development of teachers. In this sense, my analysis of recollected reflections set the stage for my subsequent quest to understand meanings of the term instructional leadership.

Subsequently, two colleagues who worked with me on collaborative projects read my "Archipelago" paper and found that they could relate to some of the ideas which I had expressed in it. For instance, in my work with Ripley (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, & Maquire, 1989; Ripley & Hart, 1989), a controlling image which we used in providing feedback during post-observation conferences emerged from my self-critical reflections: "supervision of instruction is a form of teaching, and, as such, it is easy to criticize but very hard to do properly" (Chapter 4, p. 76). In my work with Smith (Hart & Smith, Smith & Hart), a sub-theme of my "Archipelago" paper--that evaluation of teachers affects the way teachers evaluate students--unfolded as an initial prompt for investigating interrelationships between the evaluation of teachers, student evaluation, and evaluation of language arts curriculum. Thus, my "Archipelago" reflections proved influential in provoking and fostering relationships of "responsible reciprocity" (McElroy, 1990) for my professional reflections with other educators.

"Reflection-in-action" became a more important part of the process when I began working with colleagues on a specific project. According to Schon, "When someone reflects-in-action, he becomes a researcher in the practice context and does not keep

means and ends separate, but defines them interactively as he frames a problematic situation" (p. 68). I agree with the interactive emphasis which Schon is recommending, but when I try to apply this to education studies, I again question what "reflection-in-action" actually means.

When Ripley and I began to explore this issue, we used discussion as our primary means of "reflecting-in-action." Initially, I thought that an ethnographic journal format--Spradley's (1979) sections of "condensed notes," "extended notes," "a journal," and "analysis and interpretation"--could adequately serve as my private means of systematically collecting and interpreting data. I did not consider my anthropological journal as an instrument for dialogue which I should share with a collaborator. Ripley, however, quickly recognized that interim written interpretations were needed to manage the data. Plans, observations, actions, and reflections of those participating in the project were evolving at a daily rate, and it was difficult to keep up with the changes. As a result, Ripley began openly sharing his journal with me and the other two teachers involved in our project. He was modelling a process for studying immediate, at-hand events through "reflection-in-action."

Once I saw that sharing ongoing interpretations of data helped me to "reflect-in-action" with more precision, I reciprocated by sharing pertinent sections of my Spradley formatted journal with Ripley. Holly (1983) notes that in some instances a facilitator should probably wait until members of a project request observation notes. In respect to the issue of waiting, Ripley and I found that it was not necessary for both of us to provide all of our written reflections to the other teachers working on the project team. My facilitator role and the intensity of the project did not require that I share my written interpretations unless my journal entries interpreted specific comments or actions of the other two members of our project. At the end of the project, though, both teachers received complete copies of our analyses (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, Maguire, 1988; Ripley, Hart, Poulin, & Maguire, 1988) for their review and editing. From our reflective journal work, Ripley and I discovered "the importance of writing as a powerful tool for

professional development" (Garman, 1986c, p. 17).

As I have engaged in subsequent endeavors of collaborative inquiry, I have found that it is decisive for me as an participant-observer to maintain ongoing written, interpretive "reflections-in-action." In my work with Smith, we replicated the process of collaborators openly sharing written reflections with each other (Hart & Smith). But our free exchange of journals was facilitated by our previous experience with each other as students, and such openness may not be possible or desirable in other situations. The key point that I want to make about written reflections is that they became the backbone for translating my moments of collaborative inquiry--*reflecting*, *planning*, *acting*, and *observing*--beyond the soon forgotten discussions and into critical investigations of educational issues as texts. Sharing reflective writing is a facet of collaborative inquiry which needs to be set in motion at the beginning of a project if possible.

Planning. Initially, Ripley and I thought that the *planning moment* was the most important event to describe in written form. We believed that the plan determined what we were going to do. We gradually began to discover that the plan kept evolving, and the original plan became a means of tracing ongoing developments of plans. Smith and I experienced a similar pattern: for us collaborative inquiry involved a continual "unfolding" of plans (Hart & Smith). These experiences have helped me see that planning should be fluid; hints and guesses about possibilities for acting, observing, and reflecting should be encouraged.

Ripley and I found that the best means for planning is conversation. Sometimes the discussions would wander off the intended topic, but digressions also allowed for exploration of ideas or actions which needed clarification. On one occasion, I started talking about my problems in evaluating student teachers at the university. It was that conversation which helped me to discover a selfish reason for how a collaborative study at an elementary school related to some of the practical problems which I was experiencing with my own teaching at a university site and with my emancipatory hopes to refine the pedagogical practices both of myself and of those student teachers whom I was teaching.

As Tripp explains,

> Whether group or individual, socially critical action research tends to be internally directed because the emancipatory interest of the participants informs the way they themselves work as well as what they aim to achieve. (p. 163)

Recognizing the marriage of different motivations for each participant in our project prompted us to conclude: "Ownership is a critical element of the action research model. Action research implies a synergistic relationship which necessitates a 'give and take'" (Ripley, Hart, Poulin, & Maguire, p. 3).

In my work with Smith, a turning point occurred when I stopped giving directions about what we should do and acknowledged that I was unsure of what we ought to plan as our next action steps. My admission of being lost enabled Smith to become an equal partner in the planning. Collaborators need to find ways of dispersing the range of ownership and responsibilities through interactive negotiations which enhance balanced relationships for planning with each other.

Acting. The *acting moment* is more than simply doing something. The philosophy and Behaviorism maintains that "Scientific knowledge is what people *do* in predicting and controlling nature" (Skinner, 1982, p. 237). When applied to teaching, such an approach analyzes only the generic actions of teaching but deliberately ignores any questions which personalize acting. Teachers are objectified as a *what*--a non-person--not a *who*. Consequently, Behaviorists tend to talk only about making everyone's observable behaviors the same instead of recognizing and nurturing uniqueness. But focusing on behaviors should not omit questions which attempt to develop individual potential. The challenge of acting is learning to *appreciate*--grasp both the price and the worth--of differences.

Thus, if defining the acting of professional teaching involves not just considerations of *what* but also of *who*, then it also entails a *where*, *when*, *why*, and *how*. When acting can be rethought as a comprehensive set of interrogative pronouns, then it becomes a striving for personal authenticity. It is not unauthentic or contrived "doing"; nor is it simply sitting in a university classroom theorizing about meanings of pedagogy.

The goal of collaborative inquiry is learning to be and become genuine in reflecting and acting. Total authenticity is, of course, impossible in a world of imperfection and transience. This means that acting must continually struggle to get better in a world of entropic degradation. Authentic acting, therefore, involves encouraging the self, colleagues, students, and parents in collaborative processes of seeking to recognize differences yet to belong together lovingly.

Observing. The primary challenge of *observing* is to be attentive and sensitive to changing needs, situations, and reactions. In my work with Ripley, one of the teachers was dissatisfied with a "clinical" method of observation, but after several days decided that she had "learned more" from a "clinical" approach which focussed on specific scenarios for changing her approaches to teaching. Observing is learning to look and to look feelingly again. It involves not just looking at what is in the foreground but also at the background. It is listening for the silences as well as the noises. Most importantly, observing takes time to serve the needs of another. It is humanly observing the face of the other and facing responsibility such a vision can only imply--a sensation of that which is Otherwise Than Being Or Beyond Essence (Levinas).

While the observing moment usually refers to monitoring a specific set of actions or characteristics of an individual, it also connotes instances of *observance*--"due regard to any principle of action" (OED, Vol. 10, p. 660). In this sense, collaborative inquiry aims not for one of three moments nor three of four, but always seeks consummations of reflecting, planning, acting, and observing. Anything less than all four moments can be classified by other names: such as reflective inquiry, strategic planning, or active teaching techniques. As a collaborative inquirer, I have repeatedly attempted to observe a cumulation of moments. The order of occurrence may vary, and the time required for each to occur may be considerable.

Practically, it is not always possible or necessary to observe all four moments. Two sections of cited work in this dissertation focus only on *reflective inquiry* (Chapter 4; Chapter 5). This does not mean a partial observance of moments is less meaningful than

the projects which I classify as observances of collaborative inquiry. In fact, the struggle to observe a complete cycle of collaborative moments draws attention to the priority of deeper questions for my life's quest in the field of educational studies: "that we really do not know how to carry out school reform without placing further controls on teachers' practice" (Carson, p. 75). Nevertheless, the aim of my approach to collaborative inquiry resides in seeking ways of intrinsically interesting myself and other educators in reflecting upon and modifying professional practices.

Collaborative Relationships

"We must learn to walk the earth edifyingly together." (Aoki, 1988)

Friendship and Colleagueship

As a collaborator who is initially regarded as an outsider, my idealistic aim is to work with my co-laborers as a *friend*. I realize that some educators might argue that such an approach cannot be critical; friendship lacks objectivity. In response to this concern, I would hope that my efforts to practice collaborative inquiry can follow the type of collegial relationship described by Iveson (1988) in her doctoral dissertation Teaching and learning literacy: A descriptive study of the reading and writing experiences of grade I children: being "critical" in the attempts to judge how to develop teaching practices but not "negative" in attacking the personalities of collaborators. It is not my intent to corroborate everything that my colleagues do, nor do I expect them to always confirm my propositions. Lessing (1988) points out that Socrates' discussants were "friends," yet such a relationship did not prevent either Socrates or his friendly associates from being critical of each other's points of view. In a Socratic sense, I have tried to work with associates in ways which promoted interactive dialogue, both oral and written, for developing and sharing alternatives and celebrating strengths.

But becoming a friend implies a fairly sophisticated type of sharing. In working with school administrators and teachers it is unrealistic simply to expect such a connection to develop. Many limitations inhibit relationships of friendship from developing at schools: time constraints, class sizes, the location of classrooms, extra-curricula

assignments, professional duties, etc. (Lightfoot, 1983). Friendship is not a required outcome of collaborative inquiry but more of a hopeful by-product.

Consequently, I find the aim of *colleagueship* to be a more achievable relationship in initiating collaborative projects with other educators. Cogan (1973) coined the word "colleagueship" for educators as a way of describing the relationships teachers could develop through clinical supervision. Derived from *colleague*, it denotes "one who is associated with another" and is derived from the root words *col*, meaning "together," and *legare*, meaning "to choose" (OED, Vol. 3, p. 475). The different legal powers, responsibilities, and duties of principals, teachers and researchers are acknowledged, yet each educator searches for ways to respect and help each other professionally. Garman (1986a) has described this relationship as "professional kinship": "How we mentally connect ourselves to members of the community...a connectedness of respect and compassion" (p. 7). By using colleagueship, I am striving to foster an attitude of professionals choosing to cooperate and learn with one another. My aim is toward "the possibility of developing a community of cooperative investigation into significant educational questions" (Carson, p. 83).

Collegial Co-authors

My selection of colleagues as collaborators has involved a number of considerations. First, since my question concentrates on instructional leadership, and since this term is most commonly associated with principals (Minister of Education), I decided to work with two elementary principals. In thinking about secondary schools, however, my attention was directed toward relationships between instructional leadership and the subject of language arts. For this reason I chose to work with a Language Arts Coordinator at a junior high school. My motivations for focussing on language arts are partly selfish: I intend to spend the rest of my life working to improve language arts instruction. My study of instructional leadership at a secondary school also relates to literature which indicates important differences between elementary and secondary schools (Cusick, 1973; Hillocks, 1986; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lortie, 1975). The

emphasis on language arts instruction questions how leadership interfaces with instruction in a particular subject at the secondary level.

I should point out that I disclose the actual identities of my colleagues because they informedly waived anonymity and chose, instead, to co-author and to publish articles with me about our work together. Admittedly, there are risks in using real names, but there are empowering rewards also. Each of us had opportunities to gain recognition for our work by sharing our ideas with other educators at conferences and in publications. In so doing, each of us learned that we were not just anonymous objects that could be observed and written about, but that we could participate in rewriting the world which surrounds us. The authoring process changed how each of us thought about our roles as educators; and it requires that readers judge us by a different standard than those applied to most educational research. For example, all of the collaborative articles in this dissertation were painstakingly edited by myself and the other co-authors. This is not a sign of contaminating or compromising the data; all authors whom I know have developed strategies for carefully editing their texts. The propriety of our interactions with each other must be judged by standards which apply to authors.

I deliberately chose one of the principals for the study. I wrote about the effect which my first meeting with Dr. Steve Ramsankar had upon me in my "Archipelago" paper (Chapter 4). Haggerson (1987) has described life-changing meetings as "heuristic encounters," and since my first encounter with this principal, I have felt driven to work with him. He is an individual whom many people might nominate as an exceptional instructional leader: he has had 20 years of experience as a principal and has won many educational awards, both national and international. Interestingly, he has also been criticized for his unconventional approach to school leadership. The opportunity to work with him has evolved for the past three years, involving an ongoing series of reflections, observations, and plans. The main emphasis of our collaboration has focussed on describing the leadership practices demonstrated at Alex Taylor Community School. Action plans for changing leadership practices have not been a part of our work together;

nevertheless, our collaborative reflections provide a detailed explication of Ramsankar's exemplary provision of educational activities at Alex Taylor Community School. Our work (Ramsankar & Hart) also demonstrates how a Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL) case study (Barnett, 1987) can be authored by a school administrator and a teacher.

My work with Dale Ripley, Principal of St. Gerard Elementary School, developed from our mutual enrollment in a university class studying "action research." In order to fulfill the requirements of the course, I phoned him, asking that he introduce me to a teacher interested in doing "action research." He later called me back and invited me to work with him. He is a younger principal than the first; he has more than a decade of administrative experience. Our work together has deliberately focussed on carrying out an "action research" approach to improving teacher evaluation (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, Maguire, 1989; Ripley & Hart, 1989). Much of my work with Ripley provides the basis for my personal model of collaborative inquiry described in this dissertation.

My introduction to Kathy Smith, a junior high school Language Arts Coordinator, also occurred through university graduate classes. While we were both enrolled in a language arts seminar, she read my "Archipelago" paper (Chapter 4) as a part of a class presentation, and I read a paper she had written on qualitative evaluation (Smith, 1988). I asked her if she would be interested in working together on a collaborative project, and she said that she was most interested in gaining a better understanding of how to practice qualitative evaluation approaches (Guba & Lincoln, 1981). Together we agreed to investigate interrelationships between teacher evaluation, student evaluation, and language arts instruction. We wanted to find alternatives for evaluation that were consistent with the new Junior High School Curriculum Guide: Language Arts (Alberta Education, 1987), in accordance with the expectations and aims of school administrators, and related to the needs of Smith's students. The principal cooperated with us in the teacher evaluation part of our project, and since she also taught a language arts course, the principal was supportive of our efforts to involve other language arts teachers in other collaborative interactions: a poetry workshop for Grade 7 students and a presentation of our findings at

a staff retreat. Smith and I aimed to understand the "whole picture" of how evaluation affects the educational processes of instruction and leadership and to unfold ways of changing our evaluative and instructional practices.

Epistemological Aims

Habermas (1972, 1974, 1979) contends that epistemology is shaped by three knowledge interests: the "technical," which is most concerned with instrumental control over objects or people and with causal explanations; the "practical," which is most concerned with interpretive understanding of self and others; and the "emancipatory," which is most concerned with reflective communication and action upon social, cultural, and political conditions and with the distribution of power. Each of these knowledge interests provides a way of framing the direction of my research. My collaboration with Ramsankar is primarily concerned not with changing the leadership at Alex Taylor Community School but through reflective inquiry to describe and understand the practices of a particular style of school administration.

Critical social science, though, is essentially concerned with "emancipatory knowledge," and I see my work with Ripley and Smith involving the collaborators in processes of actively changing their teaching practices. Carr and Kemmis explain how a striving for change allows a project to qualify as "emancipatory":

> In emancipatory action research, the practitioner group itself takes responsibility for its own emancipation.... The group recognizes its responsibilities in maintaining and transforming the practices and understandings that characterize the common situation and which allow it to be changed. It also recognizes the limitations of its power to change these things by its own action, but determines directions for action which can realize more completely the educational values to which it is committed. (p. 204)

This definition focuses the direction of "emancipatory" projects toward responsibly modifying teaching practices and social structures, but it also warns about the importance of recognizing limitations of power and of change. For me, this warning about recognizing limitations has two ethical implications.

First, "emancipatory action research" is impossible to achieve. What qualifies research as "emancipatory" should be continually open to question and debate. Freire

(1971) has described human experience as a "complex of contradictions." Investigation of complex educational problems, therefore, is layered with levels of oppression and liberation. Any particular project cannot be totally classified as "emancipatory" because of the continual struggle against oppressive dilemmas. Instead, collaborative inquirers need to learn to change attitudes and practices which characterize common situations even though a complete state of "emancipation" is unattainable.

Second, the search for an unreachable end may be discouraging for those involved in such projects. In my "Archipelago" paper I described the depression I experienced in not being able to change some of the approaches used in evaluating instruction. Ellsworth (1988) has explored why a "critical social science" approach to educational research does not feel "empowering"; she advocates that "repressive myths" about "empowerment" and "emancipation" need to be challenged and rethought. McMahon-Klosterman (1988) likened her experiments in teaching critical theory to giving birth to a child which she and her collaborating students subsequently wanted to kill. Striving for "emancipatory" knowledge may not always feel good; nevertheless, "emancipatory" knowledge can help educators learn more about changing those particular sites in which they work. But those involved in "emancipatory" projects need to watch how each of the collaborators are feeling about the work and to encourage each individual to work through rough times and to care for the welfare of both colleagues and students. As Krall (1988, 1990) concludes about her collaborative with graduate students and colleagues, "What good is inquiry if we destroy the thing we love/study" (p. 51).

Ethical Guidelines

Since my work with teachers attempts to foster collegial relationships, and since I am actually laboring in schools with children, ethical rules are needed to protect collaborators and students. According the ethical policy of the University of Alberta (1985), my work with educators and students must abide by these guidelines:

> 1. If research procedures potentially produce physical or mental harm for the participant, the investigator must assess the magnitude and present justification for it to an appropriate ethics committee. ...As the magnitude of the potential risk increases, the benefits must disproportionately

increase.

2. Participants must give fully informed and voluntary consent to participation.

3. Participants must be guaranteed anonymity and their responses treated with confidentiality.

4. Prior to undertaking a research or instructional project, the investigator must be sufficiently knowledgeable about relevant literature, procedures, risk and possible uses to which the results may be put in order to make responsible decisions

5. The investigator must insure that all individuals under his or her supervision have the training and competence needed to carry out their responsibilities. (p.2)

I have continually endeavored to abide by the intentions of these regulations, but since I also wanted to offer participants the empowering opportunities to assume named authorship, I have found it necessary to add more stringent ethical guidelines in order to protect the welfare not only of anonymous participants but also of named collaborators: (1) collaborators may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason and without any penalty; (2) collaborators are guaranteed anonymity unless they choose to co-author papers; (3) collaborators will have the opportunity to read, critique, and suggest alternative writing or editing strategies to any co-authored articles which are submitted for publication in journals, and collaborators will have the opportunity to read and critique, prior to publication, all portions of this dissertation where their name appears or which makes named interpretations about their participation in this study; (4) school administrators have been provided with advance copies of articles for publication; (5) prior to collecting data from students, both the students and their parents/guardians have been informed in writing of the types of data to be collected, and children and parents/guardians have been given the opportunity to participate or to withdraw without penalty; (6) students have been guaranteed anonymity, and their responses have been treated with confidentiality.

Personally Realizing Meanings of Unfolding *Quest-ioning*

> *"A child said* **What is the grass?** *fetching it to me with full hands. How could I answer the child? I do not know what it is any more than he. I guess it must be the flag of my disposition out of hopeful green stuff woven.*

> *...And now it seems to me the beautiful uncut hair of graves. ...O I perceive after all so many uttering tongues, and I perceive that they do not come from the roofs of mouths for nothing." (Whitman, 1959, p. 29, ["Song of Myself"])*

One of the interesting things about Whitman's answer to the child's question "What is the grass?" is that the answer is as wondrous as the question. In a sense, Whitman has modelled how to answer or interpret mysteriously. In Chapter 6, I try to step between the methodological guidelines of my field work, both public and personal, and offer my evolving, personal realizations of what instructional leadership means to Charles Hart. Although, I offer my suggestions and guesses of what I have learned and unlearned about instructing and leading, I hope that I have not fallen into the trap of thinking I know the answers. The challenge of my *quest-ioning* is to search for ways of allowing instructional leadership to come alive for myself and for others.

In writing my personal realizations, I have been guided by Douglass and Moustakas's (1985) recommendations for "heuristic inquiry." According to this process of investigation, inquirers:

> Examine all the collected data in creative combinations and recombinations, sifting, and sorting, moving rhythmically in an out of appearance, looking, listening carefully for the meanings within meanings, attempting to identify the overarching qualities that inhere in the data. (p. 52)

In writing this dissertation, arriving at personal realizations involves a weaving of autobiographic recollections and reflections with descriptions of collaborative moments into a fabric of separate yet interrelated essay strands. My aim has been to explicate personal/public realizations that creatively construct both visionary and responsive possibilities of meanings for instructional leadership.

Hermeneutics has also guided the aims of my personal realizations. Ricoeur (1981) maintains that "The choice in favour of meaning is thus the most general presupposition of any hermeneutics," but meaning "is a hermeneutical problem only insofar as that meaning is concealed, not of course in itself, but by everything that forbids access to it" (p. 114). In this sense the unconcealment of meaning is a hermeneutic directive which attempts to unveil truth by detours through culture, religion, society, and language

(Ricoeur, 1984, p. 16). To interpret is to reveal what is hidden behind, beyond, and within human structures of meanings.

Heidegger linguistically represents the difficulties of unconcealment with the word *a-lethia*. The original Greek word *alethia* meant "truth as manifest unconcealment," but Heidegger's addition of a hyphen re-questions all the previous meanings of the word: the isolated *a* signifies an idiosyncratic "alpha-privative unword" that is no longer Greek, and *lethe* "means the self-concealing of the origin" (Caputo, pp. 184-185). The implication is that the interpretive process of unconcealment is never complete: "there is no truth, no privileged sense of Being, and hence no privileged epoch either" (Caputo, p. 181). For me, this means continually *quest-ioning* my temporary, heuristic realizations for embodied meanings of instructing and leading. I have not only tried to unconceal the meaning of living on a personal/public slash, but I have also uncovered that truth resides on both sides of a hyphen.

Since my hyphen hides not in *a-lethia* but within my title's *quest-ioning*, the unword *-ioning* radicalizes the English meanings for *quest* to a linguistic point that is no longer English. The hyphen exploits language for opening an opening opening both within and beyond language. Such *quest-ioning* implies that humans need to stop pretending that they know and can describe the answers about the meanings of life when they really cannot explain the abundance of mysteries which surround them. The direction of *quest-ioning* should circulate forward--learning ways to be and to become ethical, thoughtful beings who demonstrate an "openness to the mystery" (Heidegger, 1966) and who are accountable for their relationships with others.

CHAPTER 4

Critical Reflection of Self

Forward

> *"The double dialectic of thought and action and individual and society is resolved, for action research, in the notion of a* **self-critical community** *of action researchers who are committed to the improvement of education, who are researchers* **for** *education." (Carr & Kemmis, 1986, p. 184)*

When I read Carr and Kemmis calling for a "self-critical community," my question was what does it mean to be "self-critical"? I saw Carr and Kemmis writing critically about the views of other educators or of the society in which they lived, but for me self-critical suggested something additional--critical reflection of one's own beliefs and actions.

One of the reasons I was initially attracted to reflection was that it was my only immediate access to thinking about my teaching. Since I was on sabbatical leave, I could not "reflect-in-action" (Schon, 1983), which has become the more fashionable style of educational reflection. Garman (1986c), however, describes "reflection-through-recollection": "a process during which the practitioner rummages around in his or her memory and pictures past events or im ges" (p. 16). The purpose of such recollection is not for nostalgia but for uncovering ways to move forward.

I put Garman's suggestions on "reflection-through-recollection" into action and wrote the self-critical paper: "Notes From Within And Without The Underground Archipelago: A Personal Supervision Policy For Corroborant Interaction." In this 1987/1990 paper I use my personal journals, a Haggerson (1987) letter-essay format, Progoff (1975) organizing techniques (i. e. "steppingstones," "time-stretching"), and Butt (1986) autobiographical themes ("working realities," "reflections on past personal and professional lives," and "projection into preferred personal/professional futures") to reflect critically upon four decisive years of my career and to develop interactive principles for my future development as a teacher.

Although I was not investigating instructional leadership when I started my "Archipelago" paper, I was questioning how the leaders of the school division where I

taught implemented approaches to teacher evaluation. As a result, my analytical personal history provided the background for future "transforming experiences" (Gadamer, 1975). It prepared me for my quest to question for meanings of instructional leadership.

Finally, my "Archipelago" paper is not written with the intent that others should duplicate my style of reflections. Instead it is my attempt to be self-critical bottled in a personal text and cast into the ocean of educational literature as my witness of how I was affected and how I also effected processes of teacher evaluation and professional development at a particular school.

Notes From Within and Without the Underground Archipelago

A Personal Supervision Policy

For Corroborant Interactions

December 1-12, 1987 (Revised January 8-20, 1990)

Dear Noreen,

Much has happened since I met you at Bergamo on October 24-26, 1986. My conversations with you, your comments at workshops, your introducing me to Dr. Steve Ramsankar, and your articles on supervision (Garman, 1986a, 1986b, 1986c) have become personal "heuristic encounters" (Haggerson, 1987): meetings of minds which stimulate further investigation. Your ideas that pre- and post-conferences are "ritualistic" events which should be replaced with interactive "working sessions" and that supervisors need to understand "scenarios" of teaching enabled me to return to my school and generate a personal supervision policy. The aim of this letter is to document my struggle to develop my own supervision policy and to continue reflecting on alternative approaches to supervising and evaluating teachers.

The period of life which I reconstruct was a time of personal crisis. I felt like an isolated island revolting against an armada of educational evaluation programs invading classrooms in my school system. Now, however, I am a collaborative-minded graduate student who is on the outside of teaching for the first time in 12 years, but I am still trying to understand the meanings of my experiences through "reflection through

recollection" (Garman, 1986c). Hence, the first part of my title, "Notes from Within and Without the Underground Archipelago," profiles the points of view which guide my unauthorized account of executions of teacher supervision and evaluation.

The second part of the title, "A Personal Supervision Policy For Corroborant Interaction," acknowledges that the supervision policy I wrote is personal: it has a very limited applicability since it served my particular needs within a specific school system. Nevertheless, I hope that my story will be of some significance for others. I do not want readers to corroborate--confirm--the techniques of my particular policy but to give this letter renewed life by judging it worthy of critique. Such a reading is *corroborant*, "strengthening, invigorating" (OED, 1989, Vol. 3, p. 968). I crave meetings of minds and emotions which strengthen teachers, administrators, professors, students, and parents and which invigorate their continual interactions with each other.

Framing the Past

In loosening the soil of my experiences as they relate to the development of my personal supervision policy, I employed the "steppingstones" technique: listing "the significant points of movement along the road of an individual's life" (Progoff, p. 102). After reading my journal entries from December 1981 to December 1987, I sat in stillness as 12 episodes of my life presented themselves to me. In some instances, I cited directly from my journal. In cases where I relied on my memory of events, I have enclosed within "[quoted brackets]" my reconstruction of conversations. The value of a steppingstones approach is that it allows me to analyze layers of memories "in order to be better able to leap forward into our future" (Progoff, p. 103).

Reflecting on Steppingstones

My first important steppingstone, for example, recorded my reactions to a parent who condemned my school as a "hell hole" during a dinner meeting:

> That accusation tended to stop and make me think about my job. It seems terrible that people have such a dismal view of our school system, and I have been wondering whether I should continue working there. What is the use of knocking your brains out when so much of what you do is questioned. When someone makes comments of that kind, perhaps I should stand up and walk out, or voice my objections. Instead, I remain quiet and silent. I have done this before. (April 10,

1983)

Understanding whether I should be silent or how I should speak up are crucial themes motivating this work. I no longer want to slither silently toward an illusory privacy of an enclosed classroom. I am now more inclined to explain that teaching appears deceptively easy. If a critic were to take on the responsibility of teaching 180 students in seven classes each day, they would talk more humbly about the difficulties of teaching. Therefore, I invite cooperative interactions in lieu of scapegoating criticism.

This letter aims at finding ways of making critical self-reflection public. To tear down self-protective walls is chancy, though, because critically analyzing oneself tends to involve others. For example, my self-reflections may also reopen wounds within others who suffered losses. On the other hand, if I criticize programs implemented by senior executives or elected school representatives, it is possible that some administrators or officials can initiate transfers, public investigations, or even legal suits against an employee. One of the primary factors which make critical, self-reflection dangerous is that a teacher's career can be judged from a "panopticon" (Foucault, 1984) of professional and community viewpoints. Nevertheless, I would rather argue for joint, critical reflection than sleepwalk toward a hollow early retirement, which in T. S. Eliot's (1959) words ends only "with a whimper" (p. 840, ["The Hollow Men"]).

My professional crisis began in 1984 when the Province of Alberta required all school divisions to have a teacher evaluation policy in place by the end of the year or suffer a loss in funding. I did not think that this would be a problem for my division because school administrators already evaluated every teacher each year. For some reason, however, divisional administrators chose to initiate four different evaluation policies. As I struggled to understand the new programs, I mourned the loss of the old.

The first, new strategy for evaluating teachers began with "experts" from the National Iota Council (San Jose, California) dropping into our town for an entire week of training administrators and school board members how to use "objective" evaluation techniques: the "Instrument for the Observation of Teaching Activities (IOTA)." Teachers

were told what would be done to them at a single afternoon staff meeting. Even before teachers received any explanation of the IOTA supervision method, though, administrators and school board members visited teachers' classrooms and practiced how to apply their new observation skills. I happened to meet a school board member the night before he and two other administrators were to visit my room, and I asked him "[Do you want to see the real me, or do you want me to teach a formal lesson?]" (September 1984). He responded that he wanted to see the former. I received positive feedback from the evaluators, and I began to feel overconfident about my teaching competence.

Other teachers also felt unsure about how to react to these informal evaluation visits. Some dressed in suits or even wore ties for the first time in years. One teacher, who was one of the few teachers on that particular staff who took the time to help show me how to develop organized lesson plans and teaching objectives when I was first hired, apparently did not make a good impression and immediately received repeated visits from evaluating administrators. This particular teacher subsequently tried to make changes by organizing two extra-curricular courses at noon hours. Each of these attempts to improve seemed to tire this teacher and speed up a deterioration of personal health; such endeavors did not satisfy the changes recommended by administrators; and most actions of this teacher merited fresh criticisms from a newly organized parents' committee, which allowed only administrators to attend their meetings. As the year progressed, this teacher increasingly withdrew from others, hardly talking to those teachers who worked on the same floor. Suddenly, without most of the staff knowing why, this teacher left the school on sick leave. As a younger teacher this individual seemed capable of functioning adequately, but now this older instructor, who had once offered to help me, was overwhelmed by new evaluation expectations and procedures within the school system.

I associated this teacher's demise partly with the new evaluation policies but more with new administrators at the school where I worked. Both were young and energetic; they had spent most of the summer revising the previous principal's schedules and policies. At first, I worked well with them. Together we opposed a divisional

administrator's decision which denied any teachers in the school division from participating on provincial curriculum or test development committees. We sent a jointly signed letter of protest (October 1, 1984) to the school board. We were privately reprimanded for our letter, however, and even threatened with a law suit. The principal and I eventually appeared at a school board meeting to apologize publicly and explain our concerns. The senior administrator made himself look very good in the press and with school trustees, but his working relationship with myself and others would never be the same.

I gained respect for the new school administrators as a result of this episode, but we all seemed to tire around Christmas. After hosting a staff Christmas party at my home, I was exhausted. During the first January 1985 staff meeting, the administrators presented an inservice lesson on the responsibilities of teachers. When I challenged some of their ideas, I felt snubbed. A month later, when I learned of the older colleague's collapse, I was enraged. Other administrators in the division did not seem to be implementing the evaluation of teachers with the same zeal.

At the next staff meeting, I disrupted their inservice lesson, which was on the responsibilities of administrators, by telling them that "[they were not just responsible for evaluating teachers but for helping them as well]" (February, 1985). One of the administrators again tried to squelch my comments, but I became more energetic in my opposition. He had to end the lesson before he could list the points he wanted to make, and he asked me to stay after the meeting for a private conference with him. We were both shocked to discover that after many years of working together we did not seem to know each other.

My grief and anger was not totally linked with the demise of a colleague, though. I was bothered by the death of a number of different aspects of my silently desperate life. I viewed the early retirement of the previous principal (June 1984), the man who had hired me, as a kind of death. I was so upset by the paltry preparations for a retirement party for this individual that I became actively involved in planning a retirement party

which celebrated his many years of devoted service in a dignified manner. The lines from Death of a Salesman (Miller, 1967) "You can't eat the orange and throw the peel away" (p. 82) motivated my actions on his behalf.

On August 22, 1984, my mother died. I shared my grief only with my colleague-friend on staff. I did not feel comfortable talking to anyone else at school about it. Additionally, my university course work also caused me to question my teaching practices: a journal entry of mine at that time read, "I am full of crap, and I teach my students to love crap" (January, 1985). Both personally and professionally, I was struggling to understand a series of changes in my life.

My attitude toward processes of teacher evaluation began to plunge in May 1985 when the introduction of the fourth divisional evaluation program--frequent, unannounced "walk through's" into teacher's classrooms--happened to coincide with the sudden, unexpected death of a local principal. I personally believed that too much tension was being put on principals, and I wondered whether stress had contributed to the death of a former colleague. At the same time, I felt scared for my own welfare. I battled a chronic cold and flu during that entire month, and I was plagued by nightmares of falling off cliffs, being eaten by sharks, attending classrooms enclosed by barbed wire, and riding madly uncontrollable horses. At first, I had felt I could defend a colleague because I could not break down--my teaching fate was safe. By the end of the school year, I began to sense my own physical and mental vulnerability.

Initially, my only means of coping with what I judged as senseless "walk through" evaluations was to ridicule their administration. One morning late in May, I drowsily began my morning Grade 12 English class by confiscating a balloon which my Grade 12 students were bouncing around the room. As I placed the balloon in a shelf at the front of the room, I explained that "[We will use this balloon only if an administrator walks-through]" (May, 1985). Before I could complete taking attendance, an administrator entered my classroom. The theory of "walk through" visits at our school was that administrators will unnoticeably walk in and out. For me, the implication was that they

were not living breathing beings--they were "the invisible men."

When the administrator stepped through the door of that particular class, the first thing to greet him was an uproar of laughter. He awkwardly acknowledged the students and myself and sat in a desk. I completed taking attendance, turned around and retrieved the balloon and said, "[Let's show Mr. _____ what we have been learning lately]," and I swatted the balloon toward the students. They immediately took to bouncing the balloon around the class, as they had been doing before I had entered the class that morning. I then verbalized an impromptu rule for our game: "[The balloon must not touch the ground.]" After several successful bounces, I proposed a second rule: "[What shall we talk about today?]"

The unforgettable reply of one of the students was: "[Why don't we talk about pneumatic societies?]"

I was nearly struck dumb with the power of the student's question. We had recently completed reading Aldous Huxley's (1980) Brave New World, a futuristic world populated with millions of mindless, copulating, drugged bodies, whom Huxley described as "pneumatic." But until the moment of a student's response to my invitation for discussion, I had not connected what was happening to me at that moment--serving as a dehumanized object of observation--to the hollow, vacuous world Huxley described in his novel. I tried to stimulate conversation but was unable to express my feelings.

Finally, I added a third rule: "[We must practice individual education; every student must have the opportunity of hitting the balloon]." In compliance, my students bounced the balloon over to a girl in the corner. I now thought that the game had run its course, and I attempted to retrieve the balloon, but a student decided to sit on it. At least we had ended our thought-provoking discussion of pneumatic whimpers "with a bang" (Eliot, ["The Hollow Men"]). The administrator left shortly thereafter, and I hoped that my unpredictability would discourage him from future "walk through" visits of my classes.

The summer of 1985 was a time for me to recuperate and think. In July and August, I completed a graduate class studying modes of evaluation. By September 1985 I

was expressing new, optimistic hopes:

> I spent the last two weeks in my basement room writing. I wrote a 32 page proposal for self-evaluation, then I wrote a 48 page evaluation of the English 30 courses I taught last year. I am going to give the report on my classes to administrators next week. I feel very satisfied with my work and am looking forward to a good month. (August 31, 1985)

My response to the supposedly "objective" evaluation observations of the school division's "IOTA Instrument" and the "walk through" visitations was to define teaching competence personally by using myself as a guinea pig.

My report was too long, too complicated, too university course motivated, and too personal to be of benefit to colleagues. I shared my report with a couple of administrators, but their responses were mainly polite, silent thanks. I had hoped that my report would encourage interactions between us; instead, I was simply reversing the process of interference.

> The principal complains about the interference from the superintendent, yet the principal does the same thing to us. We teachers probably do the same to students. It is a struggle to become more horizontal and human. Yet teachers have earned the right as professionals to be respected and listened to, especially in matters of professional development. (October 8, 1985)

By writing a self-evaluation, I had hoped to prove my "professional right" to be involved in evaluations of my teaching, but administrators who had been trained in publicly sanctioned systems of evaluation were not comfortable with my single-handed attempts to re-conceptualize evaluation. I ended up being the sole proprietor of an idiosyncratic text which did not foster collegial interaction.

When the "walk through" visitations started anew for the 1985-86 school year, I again tried to joke them away. When a junior administrator walked into my room during a poetry lesson and, after a few minutes of silent observation, stood up to leave, I told him to remain seated. We were studying Gerard Manley Hopkin's (1970) "God's Grandeur" and had just read the line "Nor can foot feel being shod" (p. 27). I was suddenly struck by the literal reality of those words, and I took off my shoes and socks and invited the students and administrator on an adventurous, barefoot romp through the school.

The day after that lesson, I was first able to express in words what upset me about

"walk through" evaluations of teaching:

> What value is there for tne teacher to have purposeless visits day in and day out, which make him nervous, and about which he may never have any interaction? As I think about what upset me, I am angered that I have so little choice in the visits. They come when they want; they leave when they want. And if they decide to provide feedback, then that is also their choice. They give what feedback they think is appropriate, and at no time are my desires or goals seriously considered.
>
> I believe that administrators shouldn't hide in their offices, but they should talk to their staff members more. They should call it "individualized visits" and tailor each visit to the needs of a particular staff member. Perhaps it would be best to plan just a bit more.... I don't allow people to just walk in my house; they ring the doorbell; and if they want to visit me, we make prior arrangements. I realize that a school is a public institution supported by public funds, but in some ways it should have a "homey" atmosphere. We teachers deserve some respect--a knock or a phone call should be appropriate. (September 27, 1985)

I shared these views with the school administrators, and they agreed to knock on my door before walking-through. It was a Pyrrhic victory for me, though. While door-knocking addressed the issue of showing some respect, it did not deal with the questions of human involvement. For the most part, I remained a privatizing loner who began the practice of shutting my previously open classroom door.

As we approached Christmas, my discontent increased. The political power of the parents' committee, which still excluded teachers from attending its meetings, seemed to be increasing. Administrators could refer to "walk through" visits as a way of responding to parents' questions and keeping the parents' informed of what was happening in the school. Another teacher, who was six months from retirement, was transferred to another school at Christmas time. I believed that some students sensed that their misbehavior could bring about repeated visits of administrators to teachers' classes.

The incident that plunged me into a depression occurred the last five minutes of my last morning class on Tuesday December 10, 1985. I remember feeling exhausted from preparing to stage a school play, so I planned what I hoped would be a fun review game with one of my language arts classes. After the game was over, one of the students in the losing groups yelled out that awarding winning teams extra points on their upcoming test was unfair. I lost my temper and criticized that student and his family in front of the other students. I tried to contact the parents but did not reach them that day, which is

probably just as well since I was still angry. I also did not report what I had done to the administrators.

The next day, I talked to one of the students who had been a member of a losing team. I still thought I needed to justify how the awarding of extra points could be defended as a fair evaluation procedure. That 16 year-old student recognized that talk about extra points was no longer the issue by concluding: "[This is a small thing. But I am scared because I have seen small things become big things]" (December 11, 1987). When he said that, I remembered that Nietzsche went mad after watching a man beat a horse on the street below his apartment.

At noon, I spoke to the student whom I had rebuked, and we worked out a truce which allowed the two of us to function in class together. After school, though, I was called to the administrators' offices, where they told me that they knew about a flare up in my class from their parents' committee meeting the previous night. I was asked to explain my view of what happened, and we discussed a plan of action.

I apologized to one of the student's parents that evening, and he was supportive and forgiving. On Friday I apologized to the class. Prior to my apology I wrote:

> I have been through a living hell for the last two days; if someone were to offer me a reasonable wage to go to work in another profession, I would probably give up right now and go. And yet teaching is something what I enjoy doing; it is my life; it is my obsession. So, in contemplating a divorce at this present moment, I am also hoping to negotiate a renewed contract of my marriage to teaching.
>
> My health is presently not good, and I don't know if I have the strength to continue. More importantly, though, I am deeply disappointed in myself. I unjustly criticized a student, and I am having trouble forgiving myself. I am searching for absolution from my wife (who has given it), from my friends (who still love me), from my students (who will be approached tomorrow), from my administrators (who are supporting me in spite of my mistake), from parents (who have been critical of me), and from my colleagues at school (who don't know what I have done but would probably be concerned about my health).... There is such a cloud hanging over me at this time that I can't clearly visualize any way out. (December 12, 1985)

Even four years later, it is difficult for me to analyze what went on in this incident; the wounds have not yet completely healed. I was not just reacting against a student's petty question about a motivation gimmick; I was displacing my volcanic rage against what I perceived as an unfair purge of teachers through evaluation tactics.

What made it especially difficult to forgive myself was that I sensed that I had hurt other children in the class and lost their respect: the parent who complained was not the parent of the child whom I had reprimanded. I was never sure what effect my public apology had on students, especially to the anonymous complaining parent and student. They never made themselves known to me. That faceless, panoptic criticism caused my fears to increase. Although I was supposedly a professional teacher selling the instruction of language and literature, I was really selling myself like Willy Loman, "And when they start not smiling back--that's an earthquake" (Miller, 1967, p. 138).

As my despondency deepened, I withdrew from nearly all of my colleagues. I made up an excuse not to attend the staff Christmas party, and after the holidays I spent as much time as possible in my room teaching and grading. I timed visits to the staff room for moments when I thought no one would be there. My privatization was complete, except for one colleague-friend who continually offered me encouragement. Each day was a struggle to complete, and in my journal I repeatedly contemplated my chances of "surviving the year" (January 8, 1986).

Near the end of February, I was in trouble again. A different student in the class of students to whom I had apologized, belligerently refused to cooperate in any group activities or to complete assignments. I talked to him after class about his behavior, but he refused to acknowledge any responsibility for his actions. I became impatient at hearing his sarcastic rationalizations, and I grabbed him by the collar to shake him. At that point he stood up, and I realized that he was much taller than I. He ran out of the room saying that I was in trouble now.

This time I immediately reported my side of the story to a school administrator. After meeting with the student, the administrator told me that the student was willing to forget that I had mishandled him if I quietly admitted him back to class. But I insisted on a conference with the student, his parents, and the administrator. When we all met together, my opening comment was "[You should know that I did shake your son when I tried to talk to him after class, and I would shake him again if I thought it would shake

some sense into him]" (February 26, 1986). I now see that my confession still rationalized my inexcusable behavior much like a battering parent would the beating of a child or spouse. At the time, I was also trying to communicate that I cared for this student's welfare.

Fortunately for me and the child (who both "survived" the year together), the parents were more concerned about negotiating a mutual forgiveness than avenging a teacher's action. They began by talking about some of after-school problems facing their son. I discovered that this Grade 10 child had recently been allowed to purchase a truck. In order to pay off his new bank loan and other materialistic desires, the student had taken on a part-time job at a gas station. But part-time work had turned into 50 hours a week. As a result, a 16 year-old who had barely been able to keep up with school work before he found employment began coming to class extremely tired and irritable, and getting and spending the money he earned became the most important activities in his life.

But I cannot blame only the student. As the student explained at the conference, "[Your classes aren't any fun any more like they were at the beginning of the year]" (February 26, 1986). He was right; the quality of my classroom instruction had deteriorated. I was exhausted and depressed from trying to balance my teaching load with working on a master's program in education, supervising student teachers, staging school plays, and maintaining a family. My shaking a student was representative of an earthquake going on inside myself.

After the conference with the parents, I theorized that "Teaching, at best, is a collective activity which attempts to balance the myth of mutual learning upon the prick of a pin" (February 27, 1986). When I shared this comment with a colleague at teachers' convention, she replied, "No, the reality of teaching is tension. As a teacher you are trying to hold things together but recognizing that anything can go wrong at any minute" (February 27, 1986). The wonder is that teaching holds people together most of the time with so little communication about the complexities of modern life. But in the Winter of

1985-86, my professional world was experiencing a series of incendiary incidents which had exploded into a personal holocaust.

On March 4, 1986, I had a dream of a fire at the school. The students left according to the fire escape plan, but I was trapped inside. When I thought there was absolutely no hope for me, a mysterious door opened on the third floor where I teach, and the parent who had once called my school a "hell hole" led me to a long fire engine ladder which saved me from an inferno. Once on the ground, I checked on my students and found each one of them to be safe.

Three days after the dream, I acted on my interpretation of the dream by sobbingly telling a school administrator that I would be "quitting my job soon" (March 7, 1986). That action only seemed to worsen my depression as I wanted to exit teaching immediately but that was not possible unless I had a breakdown. For me, school had become a literal "hell hole."

Two days later, I prayed for help. Nothing changed dramatically for me, yet "I began to feel at peace with myself and that [if patient] solutions to my problems would present themselves to me" (March 9, 1986). That "feeling of peace" gave me the faith to continue teaching and to hope that I would someday understand meanings for my struggles.

My healing began to come in small, incremental steps. In May 1986, I enrolled in a university course on supervision of instruction taught by Dr. David Townsend. I repeatedly argued against the theories of supervision outlined in our textbook (Acheson & Gall), but what I could not argue against was Townsend's exemplary teaching. He dynamically modelled his beliefs: showing videotapes of his supervision of teachers in the field and inviting graduate students in the class to supervise his instruction.

He also required that class members practice collegial supervision. I stopped being so sure of how to work with other teachers after I had some opportunities to act as a supervisor:

> I feel pedagogically strange when I start to play the supervisor game in the post-conference interview, but the point I discovered was that the supervisory

> conference is only the tip of the iceberg. For me, the best discussions took place after the videotape machine was turned off. The conference, then, is the springboard for collegial interaction. It does not reveal to us the roles and counselling that go on afterwards, where the foundations for an ongoing relationship of trust and cooperation are established. (June 18, 1987)

I was learning that supervision of instruction is a form of teaching, and, as such, it is easy to criticize but very hard to do properly.

I spent the entire summer working on my graduate program, and I began the 1986-87 school year with cautious hope. I resolved to stay calmer, to control my temper, and to make peace with myself and my students. I did not resolve, however, to remain silent. I politically attacked the banning of teachers from the parents' committee of the school. Since this was an election year, I personally contacted three local school board members and explained that teacher representatives should be allowed to attend parents' committee in order to facilitate communication of parents with teachers. I noted that I had already expressed my concerns to administrators, both privately and in a March 1986 staff meeting. Each time administrators replied that the parents decided who attended, and they could not do anything to alter the situation. Within three months after my contact with school board members, school administrators reported at a staff meeting that the parents' committee had voted to include teachers if the staff wanted to come. The staff of 1986-87 voted to send two representatives to each monthly meeting.

In the Fall of 1987, my joking and griping about the "walk through" policy changed to serious critique when I called a divisional administrator to ask for his research sources supporting the program. I discovered that this administrator had implemented one chapter out of context from Glatthorn's (1984) Differentiated Supervision. Glatthorn had never intended that "walk through" visitations be universal; the primary aim of "differentiated supervision" is that "Teachers should have some choice about the kind of supervision they receive" (p. 1). By gaining access to the actual text used to justify a particular evaluation program, I could knowledgeably question divisional policy but only from a *de facto* point of view; administrators still held the *de jure* positions of power (Common).

I shared my interpretations of Glatthorn with school and divisional administrators and started arguing for the opportunity to submit a personal supervision proposal to school administrators. Through my readings and experiences, I had some general ideas of what I wanted to say in my policy, but the Bergamo Conference was the catalyst. You, Noreen, listened to my concerns, and your articles suggested an already developed language of supervision for framing my ideas about what supervisors should do in schools.

You also introduced me to Dr. Steve Ramsankar, who did two special things for me. He is the first principal who has ever hugged me; you are the only supervision expert who has ever hugged me. I cannot express what those hugs meant to me except that they were symbols of healing. Second, Ramsankar spent the evening of Saturday, October 25, 1987 telling me jokes and teaching me to sing songs again. We sang patriotic songs, Trinidad folk songs, American folk songs, campfire songs, popular songs, religious songs; I returned to my school with the song of Ramsankar within me:

> The songs Ramsankar sang weren't simple drinking songs to make us forget, which is what Ricoeur (1984) suggests the French do. These were songs to remind us of our heritage, our childhood, our trans-cultural adoption of island songs, our labor and life. They were songs of folklore, rich in the legend of the new world, in hope, in the worth of the struggle, in a hope for a utopia from an imperfect past. They were songs of other. As such, they had the effect of encouraging a chorus of singers to ponder what is really important about living together lovingly. (November 27, 1987)

Prior to my "heuristic encounters" (Haggerson, 1987) with you and Ramsankar, I could not remember the last time I had sung for enjoyment. It is now a simple but mysterious aspect of living which reminds me of my connection to others.

Two days after our meeting, I submitted my personal supervision proposal (see Appendix). School administrators reviewed it privately and gave it de jure approval. Unlike my self-evaluation experiments, which were completed on my own, a proposed action plan allowed administrators to assume partial responsibility and ownership of subsequent interactions. My personal supervision policy no longer belonged only to me: it was *ours*.

My attitude changed almost immediately:

> I am finding that I am more relaxed and willing to try things with

> students, to experiment. This feeling of freedom seems to be affecting my ability to relate to students, and subsequently, to relate to school administrators. (December 6, 1986)

The cycle--of them doing it to me, and of me doing it to my students--was reversed. We were working out a way of teaching each other by recognizing and assisting different identities. Every teacher on staff did not all need to be supervised the same; and students did not all have to be taught the same. Nor could any group (administrators, teachers, parents, students) completely own any successful implementation policy. Ownership needed to be mutually and openly negotiated, whenever possible, and rights of appeal needed to be respected. It boiled down to learning how to accept differences while working to belong together.

The irony in drawing such a conclusion about my personal supervision policy is that problems regarding evaluation were still serious concerns for other teachers at the same school. The fact that I have chosen to publicize my reflections in no way obligates anyone else to do likewise. I have been and continue to be voiceless on many educational issues. The question everyone needs to answer for themselves is when to speak or be silent--both are risky.

Principles for Interactive Professional Development

Two limitations prohibiting generalization about my personal supervision policy are place and time. The document itself was tailored to a specific school, with specific administrators, in reaction to specific school division policies and implementation methods, at a particular time in my life. Even if I proposed a follow-up policy in the same school with the same administrators, I would need to make changes. Thus, my revisions outline the imagined principles which I hope will help me in future supervisory interactions.

Dialogue. Dialogue should begin the process. Talking privately with the school administrators and listening to their concerns and determining their willingness to negotiate with me would precede any submission of a proposal. A proposal would precede any attempt to implement a policy. A policy requires the *de jure* sanction of

administrators. I would not repeat the mistake of completing a self-evaluation entirely on my own and then presenting administrators with a document for their response. Such an individual action offers no opportunity for input into the processes of evaluation and no sense of cooperative ownership. A "marriage of minds" (Shakespeare, p. 1616, ["Sonnet CXVI"]), or what Sergiovanni (1985) calls "mindscape," can be initiated and maintained only through continuing dialogue.

Political Activity Within the School System. A personal supervision policy has political implications. I cannot pretend that a policy which is applied only to one does not affect others in the same system. Therefore, for any new proposal I would make, I would work within the context of the school system as much as possible. In 1986-87, my school division's supervision policy had two main parts: the "IOTA" instrument of evaluation and the "walk-through" program. I chose to omit the latter method and build on the "IOTA" model. I did not advocate abolition of teacher evaluation, nor did I attempt to redefine it completely. It was important for some of the strategies and language in my personal policy to be familiar to administrators in order to receive their support.

Nor would I limit my dialogue to private negotiation with administrators. I was not empowered to present my own supervision policy until after I had expressed my concerns at a staff meeting which prompted administrators to invite any teachers who were interested to attend an after-school discussion session devoted solely to issues related to evaluation and supervision. A significant number of teachers attended the voluntary meeting and voiced their concerns. Their voices made my criticisms seem less like the voice of a madman in the wilderness. At that meeting administrators granted permission for teachers to write a personal evaluation proposal. Such prior approval made personal evaluation policies an opportunity for everyone and not an exemption.

I would also know and use my political rights of appeal, starting with the most personal types of contact before calling for outside help. I have called representatives of the Department of Education and the Alberta Teachers' Association before, and I will again, but on local issues the type of support from such outsiders is usually limited to

phone calls to key people in power and moral support to the caller. For example, I was not able to gain admission for teachers to the parents' committee at the school by discussing that issue with school administrators privately or at a staff meeting. My experience in challenging the superintendent's ruling that teachers not participate on provincial and curriculum committees had taught me which school trustees were more likely to listen to teachers' concerns, so I personally contacted three "listening" school board members and expressed my views. The excluding policy of the parents' committee changed shortly thereafter. If I were trying to change something at another time or place, I would repeat the process of learning the idiosyncrasies and personalities which govern the functions of a particular system.

A Teaching Dossier. From my review of literature on self-evaluation I learned how to prepare a *teaching dossier*, "a summary of teaching accomplishments and strengths" (Shore, Foster, Knapper, Giles, Neill, & Sim, 1980, p. 16). While such a dossier was recommended for university and college professors, I found it a useful means for publicly documenting teaching practices. By including it as a part of my personal supervision policy, I also informed administrators of my professional assignments with the Alberta Teachers' Association, my student activities in courses at the university, and my involvement with university research projects. For example, after working with student teachers, I requested that university faculty advisors write letters which reviewed my supervision of pre-service teachers. This allowed me to add perspectives of my teaching which were external to my school system and to form communicative links between myself, administrators, and professors.

Student Involvement. Students need to have involvement in the supervision process. Centra (1972, 1980) showed that students' ratings have a high degree of reliability when their overall results are compared with administrators' evaluations. Personally, I found students' year-end evaluations to be especially revealing. One student wrote, "Did you know that you avoided talking to our side of the room and ignored us nearly all year?" I had paid particular attention to one part of the room because of some rather

lively students in that area, but I had not realized how my positioning in the classroom had negatively affected other students. Thus, I would continue using questionnaires and written responses from students as reflective touchstones.

I also see a need to involve students in the dialogue of supervision throughout the year. I realize that this is a very controversial issue for some educators, but I think it deserves much more exploration. For example, in my personal policy I suggested that students be allowed to participate in the pre- and post-supervision conferences. When the school administrator wrote his evaluation of my teaching, he included reference to the students' reactions to recommendations for change:

> The observers suggested that the teacher could try different techniques in order to involve some of the more reserved students in the class discussions.... Mr. H. agreed that there were two or three students that he sometimes forgets and that he would try to be more cognizant of this. Mr. H's students were concerned that their teacher would be forced to do something that the class was not in favor of simply because the observers had questions about some things. Mr. H. was able to assure the students that if there would be any changes, they would certainly be in their best interests. (Administrator's Report on Supervision of Instruction, March 16, 1987, p. 2)

This passage reveals the students' part of the story. It shows that they can be nearly as resistant to change as teachers sometimes can, but most importantly it begins to recognize them as human beings with important ideas and supportive power for how a teacher's instruction affects them.

Personal Reflection Instead of Self-evaluation Forms. I am not happy with the self-evaluation forms I have used: "Instructor Self-evaluation Report on Teaching" (Seldin, 1984); "Style Delineator" (Gregorc, 1982); Cooperative Assessment self-evaluation section (Alberta Teachers' Association, 1979), and others. Perhaps, I have just completed too many forms. So far, I have not found the information they provide that helpful for instructional improvement or reflective professional development. My journal is the instrument which I view as an "instructional-friend" (March 6, 1986). It allows me to brainstorm and plan, and it records my plans and reactions for subsequent reflection and research. To me, it is a more human way of self-evaluating.

Nurturing Colleagueship, Supervisorship, and Friendship. I must learn to emulate

the role of *colleagueship* and to treasure opportunities for *friendship*. Cogan (1973) coined the word *colleagueship* as a way of describing the relationships teachers could develop with each other through clinical supervision. I believe you, Noreen, have described such collegial relationships as *professional kinship*: "how we mentally connect ourselves to members of the community...a connectedness of respect and compassion" (Garman, 1986a, p. 7). I see my personal supervision policy of 1986-87 and this letter as cries for a commonwealth of administrators and teachers who show respect of differing opinions and have compassion for others.

But I am not only seeking collegial connections with teachers: I also hope for possibilities of *friendship*. For example, in my personal policy I wrote:

> I meet on a weekly basis with my special colleague-friend. We discuss concerns we have about students, curriculum, and teaching. While I have not written formal reports of these discussions, they do occur frequently, and evaluators should know that they are probably the most important part of my formative development as a teacher. (November 4, 1986)

After 10 years of working together--sharing the good times and the bad, carrying on conversations about school, students, programs, evaluations, supervision, rejoicing in the language and interpretation of literature, and communing with the mind and spirit of the religious--my colleague-friend and I have proven that our friendship is not just personal but also professional.

I hesitate to say much more about my particular friendship because it has fallen under stern criticism. Each time I attempted to explain that friendship has professional benefits, administrators and professors challenged: "[You have not observed her teaching classes]"; "[You have not had post-conference interviews with her]"; "[You have not evaluated her teaching nor she yours]"; "[You do not really know each other]." What these accusations fail to acknowledge is the value of sharing reflective, evaluative talk with another professional. Socrates understood the worth of spending a great deal time talking with discussants, most of whom were "friends" (Lessing, p. 250). A century guided by a paradigm of educational science seems to have forgotten the importance of this philosophical relationship.

The significance of friendship needs to be restored. I will add the witness of two more friendly rendezvouses to illustrate my point. As I mentioned previously in this letter, my vision of education was changed by my meeting you, Noreen. You listened to my concerns about teacher evaluation; you responded by saying what you felt was important about the supervision of teachers; and your texts about clinical supervision provided me with many ideas to ponder. There was no way for either one of us to predict that this letter would my response to brief conversations with you in person and to my more time-consuming dialogues with your written texts. You also introduced me to the healing hugs and songs of Steve Ramsankar, who in a single night gave a different meaning to my life and my future research. If brief encounters can have such dramatic effects, then why should the daily, teaching relationships be of less importance? I am not arguing that friendship supplant colleagueship, but that it be recognized as a relationship which can positively influence education for teachers and students.

Benediction

The guiding principle of my future work with teachers as I am a teacher, with students as I am a student, with parents as I am a parent, and with administrators is to argue for different ways of understanding and experiencing the "educative act" (Garman, 1986c, Fall, p. 9). This letter is a very personal way, and it is not without its risks in offending. It is not easy to uproot a stump of the past for accurate, interpretive reflection and corroborant interactions. To the best of my abilities, I have tried to recount my experiences honestly and openly. I have been critical of some individuals in authority, but I have been critical of myself as well. Yet, the purpose of this letter has continually been to express a hope for healing and moving more humanly onward together.

As I conclude, I am reminded of Bolt's (1960) portrayal of Sir Thomas More in A Man For All Seasons. When Wolsey asks More what he is going to do about King Henry VIII not having a son, More replies, " I pray for it daily" (p. 11). Later, More expands on how those in power should govern:

> I believe, when statesmen forsake their own private conscience for the sake of their public duties...they lead their country by a short route to chaos. (During

> this speech he relights the candle with another.) And we shall have my prayers to fall back on. (p. 12)

My hope is that those who are responsible for administering and researching and teaching the children will do so according the dictates of a prayerful conscience. If prayer is too strong of a word for some, then I would change it to silent communication with the super other, or voiceless or voiced reflective thought. Whatever one calls it, I know that on March 9, 1986 when, after prayer, I received "a feeling of peace" that the problems I was experiencing could be patiently resolved. And as we humans face the problems of the future, we always have individual and collective prayer to fall back on. That is, should we choose to use that form of inner communication and silent dialogue.

With respect and love,

Charles Hart

CHAPTER 5

Collaborative Writing *With* Instructional Leaders Revisited

Forward

> *"The coming into being of the notion of 'author' constitutes the privileged moment of* **individualization** *in the history of ideas, knowledge, literature, philosophy, and the sciences.... What difference does it make who is speaking?" (Foucault, 1984, p. 101, 120)*

When writing a dissertation, the individual speaking traditionally makes a great difference: a committee-sanctioned manuscript proves a candidate's competent proprietorship over interpretations. In turn, the author builds a career on an indexical name. In this chapter I break with conventional dissertative rituals which perpetuate the ideology that individually authored texts are the most effective means of penetrating meanings *about* others, and I demonstrate an alternative mode of interpretation which apportions the responsibilities and rewards of authorship. My aim is to *manifest*--both list and demonstrate--that interpreting processes of collaborative inquiry, even dissertative explications, can include writing *with* others.

Other educators involved in field-based research are grappling in a variety of ways with concerns about authorship. Elliott's (1989) most recent "action research" enterprise at 20 schools in Britain involved over 60 teachers who constructed their own particular ways of collecting and publishing their data, but Elliott saw his authoring needs quite differently from those teachers with whom he worked. As a result, he wrote "second order" interpretations specifically for an audience of other academic facilitators of "action research" activities.

Miller (1989, 1990) and Miller, Seifert, Bauer, Martens, Ranells, and Vosseler (1987, 1988, 1989) have been involved in a sustained "action research" project for the past 5 years. The intermediate reports about their work involved each of the 5 teachers actively describing their experiences at research conferences. In Miller's (1990) book, though, the teachers were again offered co-authorship opportunities, but they opted to be referred to by pseudonyms. They believed that in order to be completely candid about their experiences, it was important for them not to be recognized by name, and they also

concluded that Miller should take the authoring credits and responsibilities for the interpretations in her book.

Norris (1990) believes that anonymity is a myth which must be more clearly addressed. If, as is presently required at the University of Alberta, a final copy of a study completed at a particular school is filed at the divisional office, then, a teacher's confidentiality is much harder to guarantee. Administrators who granted permission for a study at a particular school will often be able to recognize identities of staff members in spite of the use of pseudonyms. In Norris's case, he opted to identify the teacher with whom he worked by her real name and include her in reviewing all of his interpretations of their experiences together. In fact, she was even present at the oral examination for his doctoral degree.

Butt (1985, 1986, 1988) has worked with teachers in sustained autobiographical studies for the past 6 years Butt views the field of curriculum studies "as offering much potential for providing individuals with the personal power to take control of their own lives," and he is seeking ways of creating "horizontal relationships," rather than "the hierarchical relationship of the logistic variety" (Butt, 1985, p. 7, 20). In order to effect "a cyclic and synergistic relationship" (p. 21), he has offered the teachers a range of choices, from complete confidentiality to various types of co-authorship.

In one of the first studies (Butt, Raymond, & Ray, 1988), the teacher Ray chose to be identified under a pseudonym but was still recognized and involved in the writing of an article about his personal and professional life. Other field-based studies of the early 1980's tended only to refer to the subjects of their study through pseudonyms or by their occupational positions (i. e. "teacher," "supervisor," "advisor"): analyses of teachers' "personal, practical knowledge" (Elbaz, 1981; Connelly & Clandinin, 1983; Clandinin, 1985) or teachers' "personal histories" (Goodson, 1980/1981, 1985). And some of the teachers in Butt's studies (1986; Butt & Raymond) also chose not to co-author articles but did grant signed permission for anonymous citations of their work.

Other teachers elected to take named responsibility and recognition for their

writing. Initially, several teachers participated in writing and presenting papers (Butt, Campbell, Hart, & McCue, 1986; Butt & Hart, 1985; Butt, Raymond, McCue, & Yamagishi, 1985, 1986) at major conferences (i. e. The American Education Research Association, Human Sciences' Research, Canadian Society For The Study Of Education, and Curriculum Theory and Classroom Practice). Both Yamagishi and McCue went on to author master's projects in which they continued to interpret the significance of their autobiographical reflections upon their present and future professional practices.

Personally, I found the experiences of writing and presenting papers to be life-changing experiences. Instead of stereotyping myself and other teachers as anonymous objects about whom researchers write, I began to see living, breathing faces hiding behind the educational literature I had been reading, and I started to understand that I could become a contributing member of an authoring community. In so doing, I experienced some of the rewards of assuming an active role in spoken and written dialogues about educational alternatives: attending conferences, talking with other authors about their ideas and concerns, finding a vocabulary and literature to help me understand and explain my roles and responsibilities as a professional teacher, and celebrating the publishing of texts. My exposure to critical readers both reinforced and provoked me to continue thinking and writing.

I also uncovered some of the risks involved in throwing away the mask of anonymity: things which I said or had written were interpreted and implemented differently than I had intended them to be; some of my autobiographical recollections were upsetting or frightening to some readers who were involved in the actual experiences; things which were written or said about me caused people who had never met me to make snap judgments about my abilities and character traits; and some employment opportunities may have been affected. Nevertheless, the writer's perks which I have experienced presently outweigh the perils of forsaking my anonymity, but I also realize that such may not be the case for everyone or for every context: "The question everyone needs to answer for themselves is when to speak or be silent--both are risky"

(Chapter 4, p. 76). Thus, the choice *for* or *against* authorship should be a question open for teachers to answer individually.

In attempting to provide feasible writing opportunities for teachers, it is necessary for me to understand my own abilities and biases toward educational writing. Unlike Elliott, I do not see my role as writing only for other academics. Part of the time, I want to be able to converse with professors and question how they think and what they do; mostly, though, I hope to communicate with audiences of teachers and administrators presently in the field. This authoring aim may change should I attain the status of an Elliott, but I hope not.

Like Butt, I am committed to furthering collaborative processes which allow individuals to assume control and responsibility over their own personal and professional lives. Working from such an ideology, I continually search for ethical ways of allowing educators opportunities to choose co-authorship as a credible option. Preparation of an article for publication is an activity which has often been restricted mainly to a few privileged individuals, not teachers, administrators, and professors forming co-authoring communities. The point of collaborative writing is that--"Who is speaking?"--should not always be an individualizing drive; educators also need to be able to read and write with critical, communal awareness.

In effecting a less individualized approach to authorship, I have worked to *share* the questions of three educators and to become an insider, a person who personally cares and understands the direction of the questions being asked and who can interactively converse, work, and write with others. In this chapter I repeat three co-authored articles which have already been published in journals or presented at conferences because each paper traces written attempts to bring about collaborative inquiry with others.

Another reason why I have included previously published articles is that each paper represents a consensus of interpretations about what could and should be placed in the public domain, providing an ethical basis for naming co-authors and continuing interpretive processes. I recognize that none of the articles is without its own set of "warts

and all," but instead of editing what I now consider failures out of the original texts, I am striving to illustrate how to learn from achievements and mistakes. For this reason, I replicate Huxley's (1958, [Brave New World Revisited]) pattern of revisiting previously authored worlds by following each article with my own updated reinterpretations of the past, present, and future. As Gadamer (1986) explains: "It is important to note that all interpretation points in a direction rather than to some final endpoint, in the sense that it points toward an open realm that can be filled in a variety of ways" (p. 68). I repeat and revisit articles not to reminisce but to dialogue with a recyclable past: to point toward renewed understandings for moving onward.

Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation

By Charles Hart And Dale Ripley

With Leora Poulin And Nora Maguire[1]

An Action Research Project conducted last year at St. Gerard Elementary School in Edmonton concluded that teachers should be more involved in their own evaluation process. Teachers have valuable knowledge and ideas to contribute to the refinement of school and board evaluation policies. They also can make ongoing improvements to their instruction and professional development as they collaboratively work with other teachers and administrators in learning to improve evaluation processes.

The need for teachers to be involved in evaluation is reinforced by John Burger's Teacher Evaluation Policy Implementation, a study of the effects of Alberta Education's mandate that each school board develop a teacher evaluation policy by 1985. Burger found that 50 percent of teachers surveyed had no opportunity for input into the development of their board's teacher evaluation policies, while several other respondents noted that they had "opportunity but characterized it as a fait accompli" (p. 73). From these findings, Burger recommends that "new opportunities for administrator-teacher collaboration at the local level" be provided and that techniques be considered which allow more "teacher

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[1]This article originally appeared in the January/February, 1989, issue of The ATA Magazine, 69 (2), 4-7.

involvement in the [policy development] process in order to increase the sense of teacher ownership of teacher evaluation policies and processes" (pp. 171-172).

Both recommendations were put into practice at St. Gerard School. The research group consisted of a principal (Dale Ripley), two elementary teachers (Leora Poulin and Nora Maguire), and a doctoral student (Charles Hart) of the University of Alberta. Since each of the participants had experienced some frustrations with the quality of previous teacher evaluations, their focus was to explore ways of developing positive, professional relationships during an evaluation. Their efforts were guided by the assumption that the greater the involvement each party had in the process of planning and implementing a project, the more likely long-term improvements would result.

In order to develop customized evaluation procedures which would take into account each teacher's unique capabilities, *Action Research* was selected as the methodology for the project. As opposed to more traditional forms of educational research which encourage attempts at objective observation, action research advocates that researchers become equal participants in what is being studied. In their book Becoming Critical, Wilfred Carr and Stephen Kemmis explain: "The 'objects' of action research--the things that action researchers research and aim to improve--are their *own* practices, their understandings of these practices, and the situations in which they practice" (p. 180).

The four phases of the action research cycle, as outlined by Stephen Kemmis and Robin Mctaggart in their booklet The Action Research Planner, are: *planning*, *acting*, *observing*, and *reflecting*. These action stages are the foundation for establishing a "give and take" relationship for teachers and researchers to work together. They helped the St. Gerard group view teacher evaluation *not* as simply an evaluator's judgment of what a particular teacher's performance was, but as a sharing, continuing process for improving the present and future.

During the initial planning stages, the principal met individually and jointly with the two teachers in pre-conferences, or "working sessions" (Garman, 1986b). Together, they reached preliminary agreements about the number of visits he would make to their

classes, which classes would be observed, and the methods of feedback which would be selectively tried: holistic, clinical, "effective schools," scripting, verbal review of observer's notes, and video analysis. Leora and Nora had some anxiety about having an observer in their classrooms, but both agreed that "the more you do it, the less painful it becomes."

The turning point in the planning occurred when both teachers requested that they be allowed to observe and evaluate the principal teach their students. During their initial planning meetings it had been agreed that Leora and Nora would observe Dale teach his own classes, but Dale had never considered reversing roles in the teacher's classroom as a part of the project's design. The principal now had to grapple with the fact that things could happen which were not comfortable for him. He felt, however, that the teachers' request was reasonable and well-intentioned and agreed to try it. The crucial variable of *shared ownership* was beginning to emerge through negotiated planning.

As the initial planning was enacted and teachers and the administrator observed each other teach and reflected upon their actions, the post-observation working session emerged as another crucial evaluative event. The key difficulty was how to provide meaningful feedback to the observed teacher. Nora, for example, did not want to be "bombarded" with suggestions; instead she wanted to know "one or two things I did well, and then one or two things I need to work on, because it really makes me focus."

Leora was initially critical of a clinical model (which focused on a self-evaluation and analysis of one skill to be reinforced and one skill to be refined); she was more in favor of a holistic analysis of her class. After further reflection, she concluded that while the holistic feedback had made her "feel good" about her teaching, the clinical model had helped her "learn more." Each teacher had different and altering expectations for the ways in which observed feedback should best be presented to them.

Dale, on the other hand, initially had concerns about the time it took him (usually an hour an twenty minutes) to prepare for a post-observation working session when using a combination of observation techniques. When he expressed this problem to the teachers,

they suggested that it would be just as useful if, instead of typing duplicate copies of scripts and observation comments, he simply used his rough notes in discussing the observed class with them. This cut the time he needed to prepare for an evaluative working session to 15 minutes or less. Ongoing observation and mutual reflection helped the principal and teachers work together to find solutions for changing wants and needs.

Alternating the person acting as the teacher and the person acting as the evaluator also proved to be an extremely important experience. For example, Leora and Nora observed each other's classes, and Leora, who is a veteran teacher, noted that she had never seen a class taught other than ones at the grade level she teaches. She concluded: "I think every teacher should have the opportunity to get out of their class to see another teacher at another grade level. We should have this as a part of our regular teaching structure."

In addition to each other, Nora and Leora observed Dale teach his classes, and he was not satisfied with a cursory, "Good job." Instead, both teachers felt the challenge of providing their principal with some meaningful feedback to help him improve his teaching practice. Such experiences led to the discovery that evaluating teachers is analogous to teaching students: both are easy to criticize but very difficult to *do* well. This discovery helped the research group view the post-observation evaluation as a form of teaching which involved teachers and an administrator in collaboratively suggesting ways to improve their practice.

The opportunity to work with the principal on several levels (in planning, being observed, observing, conferencing, being evaluated, and evaluating) helped resolve another problem--the principal's credibility. During the early planning stage, Leora and Nora wanted Dale to demonstrate his instructional competence at their particular grade levels. According to both teachers, if they were going to take their principal's evaluations of their instruction seriously and attempt to follow through on suggested improvements, it was necessary for him to prove himself as a competent teacher to them personally; they would not rely on reputation. When the time came to schedule Dale's reversing roles with

the teachers in their classrooms, both Nora and Leora no longer saw the need for such proof, so the idea was dropped.

Dale, however, did teach the class of another teacher on staff during a subsequent evaluation. That experience led him to conclude that teaching a colleague's class and being evaluated by that teacher was a "no lose" opportunity for him: it allowed him to improve his teaching style at a particular grade level, encouraged the observing teacher to communicate how teaching could be improved, and increased his chances for working more effectively with that particular teacher.

The St. Gerard research group hopes that its work with role reversals will be an incentive for other administrators and teachers to experiment with what it is like to "walk a mile" in another's shoes when evaluating.

Since this project included an official report of the two teachers being added to their personnel files, one controversial concern is the conflict between *formative* and *summative* evaluation, terms which The Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) emphasizes in a 1980 Position Paper and a 1985 Policy Model. For example, in a February 22, 1988 ATA News article "Asking Questions About Teacher Evaluation" teachers were advised that if an evaluation is summative (for purposes of making decisions for employment or certification) that they "should reveal only strengths, not weaknesses" (p. 3).

The issue of combining attempts to improve instruction with evaluation was openly discussed by members of the research group and other teachers on staff. Leora and Charles were inclined to believe that instructional improvement required such a great deal of time and effort that if it was totally optional, many teachers would simply opt out. Dale concurred and concluded that "the joining together of instructional improvement and teacher evaluation was, at least at this stage in our profession, perhaps a necessary linkage." Nora maintained that "everyone should be accountable," and that although she didn't want a "hound-dog principal," teacher evaluation was beneficial because it made her continually focus upon and improve her teaching. In practice, group members did not find clear-cut distinctions between formative and summative processes.

Instead, the more important issue became the way the quest for improvement was interpreted. Teachers, for example, were never asked to identify weaknesses! The principal began pre-observation working sessions by asking teachers "what" or "how" they wanted "to improve." To him, admitting that one can improve is not an admission of weakness--an individual can improve on a strength. This attitude was clarified when Leora questioned her overall rating on her summative evaluation form by saying, "I think that there are a lot of areas where I would really need to improve." Dale, on the other hand, explained that her response was a sign of "a good teacher who analyzed her practice and worked to improve areas of her practice." Thus, whether the end result was a piece of paper placed in a teacher's file, a formative discussion with colleagues, or a temporary linkage of these two types of evaluation, the striving for improvement became the primary emphasis for evaluating teachers at St. Gerard School.

The need for improvement also applies to evaluation policies. Because of this project, teachers had the opportunity to provide input for improving local and board evaluation policies. One of Leora's and Nora's findings was that the rating scales used on the school division reporting form were difficult to interpret: what did the words *excellent, very good, satisfactory,* and *unsatisfactory* mean when applied to a variety of teaching behaviors? In order to make sense of the evaluation form, Dale met with each teacher before an evaluation was completed, and they jointly reviewed the ratings outlined on the divisional forms. Next, the principal and teachers each rated the teacher individually, and then they met to compare ratings and reach agreement. The teachers seemed to find this process reasonable, but the principal recommended that a two part scale (such as the teacher "meets the expectations" or "does not meet expectations") as a simpler, time-saving rating which "would eliminate the tensions that can result from a detailed discussion of such things as the difference between *excellent* and *very good*."

Both teachers were not satisfied with the evaluation form serving as the only documentation of their evaluation. They wanted consideration of non-instructional aspects: professional development, short and long-term planning, extra-curricular

responsibilities, and the contexts of particular teaching practices. Again, the principal met with teachers to review and reach agreement on what comments should be added to their evaluation.

Their requests confirm another of Burger's recommendations: that school boards "continue or incorporate such [anecdotal] reporting formats where warranted and consider discontinuing use of rating scales" (p. 171). Also, according to the specifications of Alberta Education's 1984 Program Policy Manual, both "effective instruction" and "professional growth and development" should be the intents of teacher evaluation, but Burger's study found an "almost total absence" of professional development in the perception of policy implementors (p. 142). Leora's and Nora's insights demonstrate some ways for encouraging professional growth in teacher evaluation.

An important criticism which many administrators and teachers are likely to raise about the St. Gerard project concerns time. During the final evaluation, both Leora and Nora expressed some concern with the time and energy that were required to complete the evaluation process. Since the project had always stayed within its planned time lines (January to March), and since most planning and evaluation sessions took place during the normal teaching day (not after school), Dale believed that both teachers were describing the "intensity" of their experiences. The research group concluded that the project should not have lasted any longer, but they also agreed that an intense process is not necessarily bad as long as it is not insensitive to the changing needs of teachers and administrators.

But is it worth spending two or three months working with two teachers on an intense evaluation process? The answer is partly a determination of priorities and goals rather than an issue of what is an appropriate number of weeks to work together. Richard Manatt, in the 1985 book The Competent Evaluation of Teaching, gives some perspective on how the issue of time relates to the priority of teacher evaluation:

> The foot draggers will say 'Yes, but it takes too much time!' Ineffective schools take too much time, 13 years of your children's and mine. Ineffective teachers cost too much. A 23 year-old teacher granted tenure despite his or her low quality teaching will cost a school well over a million dollars before he or she retires. Good performance appraisal doesn't cost, it pays. (p. 33)

The financial cost and the incalculable worth of educating children are two priorities for re-structuring the use of teaching-administrating-evaluating time.

Considering the magnitude of other demands placed on administrators, however, is it realistic to expect a principal to also be an instructional leader? Nora offers this thought-provoking response to that question:

> If they're going to make any comment, or evaluate me--definitely. If I am going to benefit from any type of praise or whatever, then I have to consider the source; and if I don't feel that the source is capable, or experienced in that area, then forget it. I'm not going to make much use of it.

The implication for administrators is that unless they want to waste time filling out evaluation forms which are meaningless to teachers, they can expect ongoing instructional and professional improvements from teacher evaluations only if they find ways of competently working together with teachers.

"Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation" Revisited

> *"Omission and simplification help us to understand--but help us, in many cases, to understand the wrong thing; for our comprehension may be only of the abbreviator's neatly formulated notions, not of the vast, ramifying reality from which these notions have been so arbitrarily abstracted."*
> *(Huxley, 1958, p. vii., [Brave New World Revisited])*

Forward

In attempting to explicate how the essentials of a past situation relate to present and future realities, I realize that it is humanly impossible ever to tell the whole truth. Both the original article and also a revisit can only highlight abbreviated musings about vast complexities. "Involving Teachers In Their Evaluation" was written at the end of the Summer of 1988, and it concentrated on telling a story of evaluation for teachers. A second article was published a year later (Ripley & Hart), which told an evaluation story for administrators. The single-spaced analyses from Dale's and my field notes exceeded 100 pages each, and even those documents did not tell the whole story. My challenge in renewing a dialogue with one abbreviated version, therefore, is not to oversimplify to the point of falsification but to learn to condense in ways which acknowledge that omissions are and always will be problematic in describing human experience, yet which also search for pearls of memory worth preserving in helping myself and others take the next steps in

facing an uncertain and constantly changing landscape of the mortal present and future.

From Patronized Anonymity To Risk-taking Co-authorship

When I reflect back on the day I first met Leora and Nora, I think that "We have come a long way." In our concern to protect teachers' anonymity, Dale and I were uncertain whether the teachers participating in the study should be introduced to me by their real names or by pseudonyms which we had invented for writing about them. Fortunately, it just did not feel appropriate to speak to Leora and Nora with pseudonyms, and from my first meeting them, we referred to each other by our actual first and last names. From my perspective as an outside facilitator, using our given names was the first trusting step which allowed me to become an inside co-laborer with teachers, not anonyms.

One of the subtle implications of guaranteeing anonymity is that teachers are either not knowledgeable or not powerful enough to become members of an authoring community of educators. Although the security of anonymity is a very real and important need in many instances, a blanket assumption that anonymity is better than naming or authoring promotes an attitude that teachers require patronizing support. Only those teachers who dare to publish on their own or who enter doctoral programs in order to learn how to author ever escape the silencing systems of divisional and university protectorates. The predicament of teachers is, in some ways, analogous to the plight of billions of women whose identities have remained unnamed throughout epochs of patriarchal literature.

Learning to author, however, also involves risk-taking. For one thing, what does it mean to grant "informed consent"? In our case, Dale and I did not decide to offer Leora and Nora co-authorship until near the end of the study. At that time, Dale and I believed that nothing which we intended to publish about the study would be embarrassing for either teacher, and we also agreed that since we frequently quoted their ideas and suggestions, they should receive credit for their contributions. So, we offered to include their names on our initial university reports for a graduate class. We allowed them to read

everything that we had written. Several days later, they returned our reports, after making one or two minor changes, and they agreed to allow their names to appear as co-authors. The circulation for our reports consisted of only a small group of graduate students and two professors, which seemed quite remote from the teachers' professional or personal lives.

At the end of the summer of 1988, Dale and I met again to map out an article for an educational journal. We decided to send our first submission to the ATA Magazine because we wanted to reach an audience of teachers. Working from an outline of ideas which we jointly developed, I wrote an initial draft, and Dale made extensive revisions and editing corrections. After several revision rounds, we shared this paper with Leora and Nora, again extending co-authoring rights, and they approved it without any corrections. Three months later, it was published for a much wider audience than our first co-authored reports.

If I could re-submit the ATA article, I would change one dependent clause: "Since each of the participants had experienced some frustrations with the quality of previous teacher evaluations" (p. 4). Even though I had written those words, they somehow looked and sounded differently when packaged on a glossy page for many eyes to see. In my 12-year career as a teacher, I have worked under three principals, and each one of them seemed to be implicated by that statement. With more careful scrutiny, I could have easily phrased the same idea more positively in order to avoid negative reactions for myself or any of the other

co-authors.

That one clause taught me that obtaining consent to co-author requires thoughtful, detailed informing and deliberation. Especially new authors must be encouraged to take their time in reading and thinking about a paper before consenting to publish. They should share a prospective article with friends and loved ones for their reactions and revisions. They need to understand what types of audiences may read and respond to a particular article. Some audiences are far more aggressively critical than others. To the

best of an experienced authors' abilities, a range of possible reactions should be explained to beginning authors.

New authors also need to understand that an experienced author may return to experiences or articles and interpret them from different perspectives. The words on this page demonstrate a different look at previous experience. And in revisiting my own collaborative work, I have noticed that I am writing in an entirely different style than the original article: this piece is in first person; the original article was in third person; in this paper I feel much freer in expressing my particular ways of understanding the world; in the collaborative piece some of my strong opinions were edited out; I have also included details which were not present in any of our previously co-authored field notes and analyses. As I reflect upon this revisit, my obligation as an author is clear--I must share this or any subsequent interpretations of my experiences at St. Gerard School with each named co-author for their review and encouraged revisions. Co-authorship compels each author to speak with greater ethical responsibilities, in all situations, about any co-writers or any named participants.

Although my review of some of the difficulties I have experienced in writing with others may seem to suggest that educational authors will find interpretation about anonymous participants easier, I emphatically believe that the challenges of co-authorship are well worth the increased risks. Three of my co-authors have since applied for graduate programs, and the ability to cite their respective names as educational authors had an empowering effect for each of them. Not only are new co-authors made "famous," whether for praise or critique, they also begin to experience some of the perks that come with actively using their authoring (not anonymous) voices to name the world. Most importantly, teachers learn that they are writers who can also teach their students to write with and for others.

Revaluing The Language Of Teacher Evaluation

A critical dilemma of teacher evaluation is the necessity of speaking in divisive dichotomies: strengths versus weaknesses, good versus bad teaching, formative versus

summative evaluation. A drive for sharp distinctions is evident in the teacher evaluation policy advocated in the ATA News article "Asking questions about teacher evaluation": if an evaluation is summative (for purposes of making decisions for employment or certification), teachers "should reveal only strengths, not weaknesses" (p. 3). School policies, on the other hand, usually direct evaluators to observe and identify problematic aspects of a teacher's performance. Each mind-set promotes cat and mouse games where neither teachers nor evaluators can even talk to each other about evaluation.

Much of my doctoral work has focused on developing a language that helps teachers and administrators understand teaching and evaluating as reconstructive processes. For example, throughout the Saint Gerard Project, we claimed that the primary purpose of our evaluative efforts was "striving for improvement" (p. 85). Although I still labor in schools with a sense of hope, I am no longer as confident about the implications of the phrase "striving for improvement" as I was when we wrote it. One problem is that many current teacher evaluation forms ask evaluators to list: first, "major strengths/commendations" and, second, "areas of performance for improvement" (Strathcona County Board of Education, 1989, p. 3). From the juxtaposition of *strengths* to *improvement*, I infer that the latter word is understood as a synonym for weakness. In fact, Leora interpreted the need "to improve" as a weakness during her final summative evaluation conference with Dale (p. 85). The idea that "an individual can improve on a strength" (p. 85) may be more of an idiosyncratic view than one which many teachers and evaluators actually share in promoting professional development.

Another problem I have with basing evaluation strategies around an image of continually "striving for improvement" is that such a phrase connotes that people will constantly progress. But my experiences in the teaching "archipelago" have taught me that humans do not get better and better each day. In some situations and at some times, things get worse. It is not possible to bring about an enlightened utopia through unabated improvement. Yet I often find myself talking and writing as if the myth of continuous improvement is a fact of life. Commonly accepted meanings of overworked words may

have their own built-in traps which prohibit a valuing of both success and failure.

Consequently, I am looking for other means and words to evaluate the human condition. Nietzsche (1987) is one of the few writers who has helped me glimpse a different way of interpreting life. He argues that "good and honoured things" are "artfully related, knotted and crocheted to these wicked, apparently antithetical things, perhaps even in their being essentially identical with them" (p. 16). For Nietzsche, truth is a tightly woven tapestry of theoretical and practical incongruities which recognizes "untruth as a condition of life" (p. 17). This requires people to understand that "untruth" is not the antithesis to truth but "its refinement" (p. 37).

In considering ways that a vocabulary of teacher evaluation can speak more realistically about the opposing wills of strengths and weaknesses, I have recently replaced the phrase "striving for improvement" with the heading: *THINGS TO BE REINFORCED/REFINED*. While working as a faculty associate at The University of Lethbridge during the Fall/Winter of 1989-1990, I have used this thematic clause in self-evaluating my own teaching and helping student teachers how to evaluate their instruction. As I now take the opportunity to reflect upon why five words have become so important to my evaluation of teaching, I find that I am discovering anew how the meanings and grammar of each word are symbolically important for me. They represent a revalued language for understanding why and how evaluation has "degrees and many subtleties of gradation" (Nietzsche, 1987, p. 37).

At times, I have been embarrassed by the word *THINGS*. In situations where more specificity is needed, I have replaced my indefinite substantive with more precise words, such as: skills, concepts, attitudes, psychomotor objectives, questioning strategies, affective learning encounters, etc. But as an open-ended organizer, *THINGS* is exactly the word I want because it does not force me to predict what I, or any other teacher, may need in a particular situation. Instead, *THINGS* can denote:

> ...a deliberative or judicial assembly, concerns, that which is done or to be done, that which is said, that which is or may be in any way an object of perception, knowledge, or thought, the actual being or entity as opposed to a symbol of it, a living being, a composition, [and as a verb], an obsolete form of

THINK. (OED, vol. 17, pp. 941-943)

In any given evaluative situation, I may need anything from a grab bag of *THINGS* to do, or I may simply require one or two *THINGS* to *THINK* about.

I have also worried about the present infinitive *TO BE*. I could easily convert to active voice, but the passive structure effectively implies the importance of an unidentified actor or actors by whom (i. e. by you, by me, by him/her, by us) *THINGS* will be changed. The primary purpose for evaluating teachers is to bring valued *THINGS* into a state of existence--or being. In this sense, my *TO BE* reminds that the question of *being/Being* is the central task of Heideggerian hermeneutics. Thus, my expletive *TO BE* challenges toward incarnate evaluations of present and future possibilities.

But as the present and future are required by the temporal laws of nature to recede into the past, so does the passive intent of my clause grammatically require that the words following *TO BE* include a present or past participle. I see this governing, linguistic pattern as an underlying sign "whose very repeatability makes it possible to generate sense in the first place and impossible to stop altering whatever is produced" (Caputo, p. 142). New, poetic meanings emerge from repetitions of regulating structures. In an analogous sense, evaluators of teaching must search the traditions of the past in order to understand the grammars that govern them and, where possible, to decide how to move onward. Evaluation is a process of regeneration which systematically yet playfully produces and alters both backward and forward amidst a flux of repetitive uncertainties.

The playfulness of repetitions is again apparent in the meanings of *REINFORCED/REFINED*. Admittedly, both words are in some senses synonyms for strengths and weaknesses. As a transitive verb, *REINFORCED* signifies: "to furnish with additional support," or in psychology "to strengthen (a response), usually by repetition of a stimulus" (OED, Vol. 13, p. 537). *REFINED* denotes: "purified," "freed from impurities" or "distinguished by the possession of refinement in manners, action, or feeling" (OED, Vol. 13, p. 468). But both words also offer different, interpretive hearing-aids for talking about the old, idealistic dichotomies. The *re-* prefix comes first in each word "as an

enabling condition of possibility, as a code of iterable, repeatable signs, which generates presence" (Caputo, p. 139). This affixed signification signals that whenever someone or something is "strengthened" or "purified," that the process has to be done again and again. Even a reinforced rat, who has been the recipient of repeated training procedures of "operant conditioning" (Skinner, 1984), reruns a programmed maze in ways minutely yet distinctly different from previous crossings. This principle of differentiated iteration is more apparent in highly complex interactions: for example, no one ever gets teaching completely right. Each attempt to manage a class of pupils is different and never completely perfect. Hence, evaluation of teaching is an ongoing refiner's fire fueled by the reinforced energy of ever-present impurities.

I further emphasized the reciprocal interconnectedness of my *REINFORCED/REFINED* evaluatory aims by both dividing and joining them with a typographical slash. For months, I have subconsciously extended this slash to the bottom of each observation sheet I used in evaluating student teachers. It was not until I reflectively revisited my ongoing quest toward fair and meaningful evaluation of self and others that I remembered the concluding phrase of my introduction: that I intended to search for ways of "living on multiple edges of any dividing slash" (Chapter 1, p. 2). Suddenly, I saw that my weekly observation sheets were quite literally slashed. This latest realization of my own heuristic signifier reminded me that pushing at the linguistic edges of evaluation was really not what my work was all about. Reconceptualizing evaluation involves far deeper and often inexpressible values. It is not the words in and of themselves which are important; it is what lies beyond signification--to find a value beyond all price for each evaluated incarnation.

Inverting Challenges Of Credibility

When I recently visited a school to evaluate student teachers and met with the principal for the first time, I mentioned that I had studied at a university for the past two years. His immediate response was, "So, you are telling me that you have lost contact with teaching." I defended my doctoral studies by claiming that I had maintained close touch

with the field, but I had a silent urge to ask the principal how long he had worked as an administrator and had, as a result of his leadership position, lost contact with teaching himself. The underlying assumption of the principal's voiced and my voiceless challenges was the obstacle which Dale, Leora, Nora and I had named "credibility."

The way we initiated a means of understanding the credibility problem at St. Gerard Elementary School was through "shared ownership" of planning, which led us to discover the value of role-reversals. After one of our planning sessions, for instance, Dale agreed to teach Leora's and Nora's classes while they evaluated him. When the time came to implement this planned exchange of roles, both teachers no longer saw a need for it. First of all, through Dale's observations and reflections of their instruction and through their observations and reflections about the Grade 6 class which he taught, Dale's credibility as a teacher was no longer in question. Initially, the teachers were seeing the issue of evaluation of teaching primarily from their perspective, but as they had time to become involved in evaluating each other's situations, their outlook changed. Dale and myself also began to look at our own credibility differently. We were not experts who dictated through evaluation how teachers should teach, but colleagues learning to understand and work with others. Such experiences led us to conclude:

> The St. Gerard research group hopes that its work with role reversals will be an incentive for other administrators and teachers to experiment with what it is like to "walk a mile" in another's shoes when evaluating teachers. (Chapter 5, p. 93)

As Dale and I continued to reflect upon our hopes for teachers and administrators, we wrote a follow-up paper for school principals (Ripley & Hart). For a while, we considered omitting any mention of role reversals for that particular audience. Perhaps, we conjectured, the idea of modelling one's own teaching will be too radical for administrators to accept. But we decided that our experiences in being willing to switch places with teachers was simply too important to erase, and we ended up concluding:

> Principals should consider having teachers observe them teaching and modelling instructional skills. When a principal can effectively demonstrate instructional leadership through their own teaching practice, as well as a strong desire to continue to learn and to grow as a teacher, they will then be in a much better position to have a positive impact upon the teaching practices of those

whom they evaluate. (Ripley & Hart, p. 15)

We resolutely believed that other administrators needed to learn to see teacher evaluation from a teacher's point of view.

A year later, we reaffirmed that belief when we reported our study at a Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies (CACS) Invitational Conference on Collaborative Action Research (1989) at Jasper, Alberta. In reflecting on the language of the symposium, Smith (1989) pointed out that our controlling image of "seeing as teachers see" was one which he, as an academic, found alienating. He maintained that such a view politicized schools as the sole grounds--not as one of many sites--for defining educational practice. Smith argued for a language of "pedagogy," which could observe from a distance and thereby enable a sharing of multiple perspectives on practice.

My reactions to Smith's critique were twofold. First, he had precisely identified the exclusionary effects of always looking at and describing things from the teacher's position. Our action research framework allowed only teachers to stand up when the truth is to be told about who real practitioners are. The broader educational community--children, parents, school and central office personnel, school board members, and even academics--need to be included and involved in definitions of practice. Second, I was estranged by how easily a word such as *pedagogical* could slip off Smith's tongue. I inferred from his choice of vocabulary that university words were better than contextualized, school words. In a different way, he was also privileging the university site as the place which governed the words for defining educational practice, and when one group--whether they be teachers, administrators, or professors--assume that they possess either the experience, the power, or the vocabulary necessary for credibly describing what happens or should happen in educating children, then such a presupposition hinders interactive collaboration.

One tactic which is making a difference in helping me understand my own vain drives for credible power is *inverting*, "to reverse in regard to position" (OED, Vol. 8, p, 44), the direction of any challenge. An inversion does not censure another's language or

way of seeing the world but repeatedly listens to what is behind, around, and between a test and searches for ways to share different perspectives. The drive to critique must not be abandoned, but it must also not be directed simply outward toward others. Critique must also turn inward. To invert a challenge of credibility, involves paying attention in at least two directions: critically understanding characteristics about others and about the self.

For example, after reflecting about the principal who suggested that I had lost contact with teaching, I realized that although I had reported at the office before visiting any student teachers at his school, I had failed to personally introduce myself to the principal. According to his frame of reference, my action demonstrated that I had lost contact with teaching because I had violated one of the daily codes which he used to maintain order for the teachers and children at the school. Once I perceived the intent of the rule about visitors introducing themselves, I understood one of the reasons why he seemed to be immediately critical of anything I said. I also perceived that I needed to get to know this individual. I looked for opportunities to talk with him in ways that did not end up with each one of us defending or threatening our perceived domains of power. The real challenge for each of our respective credibilities is evidenced by our willingness to begin to share common purposes where possible, and when that is not feasible, to understand and respect differences.

A sharing of differing wills was demonstrated when Dale planned to switch places with Leora and Nora. In writing about our experiences, we concluded that role reversals and modelling of instruction were what was important about our collaboration, but the fact that Dale never actually completed the planned reversals suggests that something else was going on. Dale's willingness to accept the teachers' requests for him to walk in their shoes for a day enabled him to pass the teachers' test of his credibility. Instead of reversing roles, Dale inverted a challenge of his credibility into an action which communicated an attitude of trust and respect for teachers on his staff and a willingness to learn from them.

Such interactive relationships with teachers may be more difficult for academics, where the logistics of time and space often inhibit close collaboration. Additionally, proprietorship over words, numbers, and methodologies is frequently the academic battleground upon which careers are built and tenures granted. Consequently, part of the responsibility of a critical inversion for academics is to acknowledge their professional and economic incentives for controlling educational discourse. Once this motivation is conceded, one of the primary challenges of credibility for academics becomes using language to communicate shared purposes. This means that one word or image, such as *pedagogy* or *teaching*, is not inherently better than the other for conversing about education. What is appropriate for one situation may be a liability in another context.

Variations in words or competitive definitions of theory and practice should not be heard as discords but as voices that add tension and interest to educational dialogues. Learning to understand differing opinions of educators from many sites is in some ways analogous to listening to the two to six parts voiced in a Bach fugue. Forkel remarked that "Bach considered his parts as if they were persons who conversed together like a select company" (Randel, 1986, p. 328). This analogy suggests that educational disputes about credibility are like varied musical themes, and one subject should not drown out other viewpoints from educational conversations. Instead, they should play off each other. And for me, the principle of inverting a challenge--not only trying to change another but also altering the directions of one's own thinking and actions--is one tactic for discovering varied ways to move on together.

Creative Curriculum For Meeting The Needs Of Inner-City People: A Case Study of Alex Taylor Community School

By Steve Ramsankar and Charles Hart[2]

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to describe the remarkable transformation which has taken place in an inner-city school. The change has seen a rigidly traditional school become the hub of community activities. Members of the school, home, and community forged partnerships which developed trust, identified needs of the community, and effected co-curricular programs and services for students, parents, preschoolers, senior citizens, and other members of the community. It is a study of 20 years of loving service by a principal and staff and an explanation of how their visions of multicultural education have borne fruit.

The School And Neighborhood

The Alex Taylor Community School, built in 1907, is located in the inner-city of Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. A staff of 8.3 certificated teachers, a full-time custodian, a support staff, and a number of volunteers work as partners in search of Excellence in Education. The population is highly cosmopolitan and transient. Many children live with a single parent, and most families live below the poverty line. Many are on social assistance. A high percentage of the 175 elementary students are new immigrants to Canada; there are currently 25 national and ethnic groups represented. Visitors become aware immediately of the cultural diversity upon entering the school and being greeted by a large wall sign which says "Welcome" in ten different languages.

Curricular/Co-curricular Programs and Services for a Community Schooling Family

As the welcoming sign suggests, Alex Taylor is not just a place where children from Kindergarten to Grade Six attend. Since Alex Taylor has been designated as a

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[2]This paper is reprinted with the permission of Dr. Steve Ramsankar. It was originally presented at the Triennial World Conference "Creative Curriculum Development and Practice" of the World Council for Curriculum and Instruction (WCCI) at the Leeuwenhorst Congress Center, Noordwijkerhout, The Netherlands, August 5-13, 1989.

"Community School," it receives extra funding from the province, and its mandate includes providing educational programs for adults. As a result of such a charge, the school has opened its doors to welcome everyone in the community. This openness has prompted the Alex Taylor teaching staff to re-think their vision of what it means to educate. In their perspective, each person is looked upon as having basic and unique needs which the school must responsibly attempt to understand and meet, and each person has qualities, talents, and abilities to contribute to the school and to the larger community.

The guiding image for such an approach to education is expressed through the metaphor *school is a family*. In talking with students, Principal Steve Ramsankar often tells them:

> Remember children that we are a family. All of us help each other. This means that the big people at the school, the teachers and helpers, are parents away from home. They should be greeted and treated with respect. If you have a problem, you know that you can go to them for help. Children can always find help at our school. This building is our home away from home.

One of the interesting qualities of the metaphor of school as an extended family is that most listeners, regardless of age, can relate positively to the ideal of a caring family. In most cases, the family unit has been the key to individual, cultural, and social survival.

The Alex Taylor concept of family is defined as people who help each other at the school. This means that a good custodian, a secretary, support staff, parents, guests, senior citizens, and police can make the school a friendlier place. Every individual is vitally important to the operation of the school. Each person can be helped and can help others. In so doing, the meaning of family becomes clearer and stronger. The family unit becomes a top priority for helping people learn how to live together in peace and harmony.

It is this concern to care in a responsible manner for the welfare of others which gives family its deepest meanings and strengths at Alex Taylor School. Consequently, a family of teachers, custodial staff, aides, and volunteers work together in creating a schooling family. In fact, some of the volunteers have worked at the school longer than most of the staff. For instance, Virginia Yankowski, who started helping at Alex Taylor

20 years ago when her children were students, has stayed on to become like a "Mother Theresa" for both children and adults. Mornings, she is frequently found in the staff room cooking her Cree specialties--moose-meat cakes and fried bannock--for youngsters who have arrived without breakfast. Every Tuesday she coordinates preparation of a luncheon for senior citizens and visitors. Virginia Yankowski's involvement is only one example of many volunteers who are striving to model what it means to live in this world as a loving, caring family and to discover ways to help each other.

Outline Of A Co-creative Curriculum

Cherryholmes has defined curriculum as "a study of what is valued and given priority and what is devalued and excluded" (p. 297). At Alex Taylor curriculum is more than a government-mandated program of studies of what should be taught. In addition to the recommended curriculum, the principal and staff continually search for ways to develop curricula which relate to the needs of community's students, parents, senior citizens, and preschoolers. Principal Ramsankar advocates:

> Educators must be cognizant of the fact that we are living in an ever changing society; therefore, we must be prepared to re-define the curriculum to meet the needs of the community.

In order to bring about such a vision of curricula, Alex Taylor School has become a beehive of educational and cultural programs. The following list gives a brief overview of some of the programs and activities which have been developed at Alex Taylor:

1. a baby-sitting service for children six months to five years, which enables parents to attend adult education classes at the school.
2. a kindergarten for children age five-six.
3. instructional programs for Grades one-six.
4. a nutrition program to supplement children's diets.
5. a self-esteem program, based on research by Dr. Jim Battle (1987), which fosters and monitors the self-esteem of children.
6. Cub Scouts, Big Brothers, Brownies, and Girl Guides Programs for children both during and after school hours.
7. school and public performances by the school's bell choir and choir.
8. the sponsoring of cultural exchange and travel programs within the

province of Alberta, in Canada, and international trips (this year the Grade Six students travelled to Trinidad where they were welcomed by the Prime Minister and President of the Republic).

9. social, health, mental health, and dental hygiene programs for students and adults.

10. a volunteer summer school for inner-city children, which has operated for the past ten years.

11. a weekly police-in-school liaison program coupled with an awards assembly to recognize various students' talents and accomplishments.

12. food and clothing for needy families.

13. English as a Second Language (ESL) for immigrant youth and adults.

14. citizenship programs designed to introduce children and their parents to the ideals and realities of Canadian culture and citizenship.

15. weekly meals for senior citizens with students helping to serve the food to seniors.

16. a senior citizens' drop-in centre and recreation program.

17. a liaison program for elderly war veterans.

18. further education and evening education programs organized by both the school and the Parents' Society.

19. research projects, work experience, and practicum experiences for university and college students.

20. special events and cultural celebrations, such as the in-school Halloween party (in October) or the annual Chinese New Year Celebration (in February), which hosts over 400 invited guests and city dignitaries for an evening dinner and school concerts.

The variety of activities and programs indicates how Alex Taylor is striving to educate all the people whom the school serves. Haggerson (1988) has described the process at Alex Taylor as:

> ...participation in the continual creation of the universe of one's self, of others, of the dwelling places of the world, that is, a co-creation.
>
> We, as researchers, have changed as persons, as teachers, as scholars as a result of our relationships with those of Alex Taylor. We are part of the co-creation. (p. 5)

Co-creative curriculum, in this sense, seeks to involve the community, including visiting researchers, in quests to educate themselves and others.

In framing their co-creative curriculum, the principal and teachers continually

look at their students and their community and search for ways to meet the needs of the *total child* by creating an environment of *trust, love, self-esteem,* and *hope*. Their approach parallels Maslow's (1970) "Hierarchy of Needs" (i. e. "physiological," "safety," "love," "self-esteem," and "self-actualization"). It is important to understand, however, that in practice human needs and motivations cannot be represented as discrete, motivational actions which directly relate to needs. Instead, trust, love, self-esteem, and hope imply interactions with each other. For the purpose of explication, the organizing framework of the Alex Taylor co-creative curriculum will be described as distinct sub-headings in this paper.

Meeting Trust Needs Of The Total Child

In order to foster trust, the teachers and support staff of Alex Taylor watch for ways to meet basic needs of the total child: the academic, the physical-recreational, the spiritual, and the social-cultural. This vision of needs is derived from Luke 2: 52: "And Jesus increased in *wisdom* and *stature*, and in favour *with God* and *man*" (The Holy Bible, King James Version, Luke 2: 52 [Italics are added to indicate the key words of the total child concept]). This Biblical passage frames a way of looking at children's present needs and for encouraging each child's unique potential.

One of the ways to help children gain needed "wisdom" is through the academic curricula prescribed for elementary schools. Consequently, the Alex Taylor teachers insure that adequate textbooks and supplies are on hand for students, and they work closely with the school's volunteer librarian in coordinating enrichment reading resources. Teachers meet frequently to discuss the curriculum and plan ways to improve their teaching, and they carefully analyze the results of city and provincial examinations in monitoring students' learning. Weekly assemblies also provide ongoing opportunities to recognize academic progress by students.

The academic needs must be sought, however, by simultaneously watching for ways to meet other needs. The physical-recreational ("stature") needs involve more than planning and supervising activities in the school classroom, gymnasium, or playground:

> Hungry children will usually not pay attention in class; they must be fed. Each school day, Alex Taylor children receive nutritious snacks.
>
> If children are improperly dressed, they need to be clothed or taught how to care for themselves in a northern climate. Alex Taylor always has spare clothing on hand for children and adults, and a washer, dryer, and showers are also available for children.
>
> Some children come from unstable home conditions and are deprived of sleep. At Alex Taylor such children are allowed to rest for half an hour in the nurse's room and attempts are made to counsel with parents.
>
> Since many of the parents in the area cannot afford to take their children on trips, the teachers frequently plan field trips, which vary from a visit to the city zoo, attending a sports event, going on a camping trip, or planning an international excursion.

The spiritual needs, growing in "favour with God," are harder to address because in a multicultural school they cannot be defined in a denominational sense. Ramsankar explains the meaning of spiritual at Alex Taylor:

> When I speak of the spiritual, I do not mean the church per se. To speak of the spirit and the spiritual is not to speak of something other than human kind, but more as it is lived, known and demonstrated. Knowing the spiritual refers to knowing one's self and others and their traditions. I refer to man's caring spirit and love for each other.

Consequently, the school staff continually look for ways to help students feel better about themselves and care about others. For example, a recent school assembly was devoted to the United Nations declaration calling for an end to discrimination. At the assembly children, parents, and community leaders sang songs, said prayers, and expressed their hopes that the world could become a more loving place in which to live.

The social-cultural needs, growing in "favour" with "man," focus on ways to get along and help others. Students are taught to obey the rules of the school. These rules centre upon "no fighting," or "no name calling." Children are continually encouraged to learn how to cooperate and respect each other. For their own safety, children are also reminded why they should not play in the parking lot or near the busy street which passes by the school, and they are taught how to cross streets safely. Through discussions at the frequent school assemblies, they learn how to talk with police officers and to respect them as protectors of law and order in Canada, not as public officials who should be feared.

They are also encouraged to think of and help others. They can assist the

custodian in making the school a better place by picking up things which may clutter school hallways. Additionally, they are given opportunities to help senior citizens. When a city newspaper reported that senior citizens in the area were unable to afford a decent meal, the school staff and volunteers saw fit to bring the seniors into the warmth of the school building and allow the children to help serve them a nutritious, hot lunch. Ramsankar maintains that:

> A child will be less inclined to steal from, mug, or take advantage of senior citizens if they have had frequent opportunities to see, talk, and interact with them. Children need to have frequent opportunities to help older people in order to understand that seniors are human beings and to appreciate their accomplishments.

The concept of the total child--understanding the academic, physical-recreational, spiritual, and social-cultural--assists Alex Taylor staff members in assessing what children require. As these needs are met, children learn to trust those people who are responsible for operating schools and to see school as a place where meaningful learning can occur.

Greeting Love Needs

Fostering a trust that school is a safe, nourishing, uplifting, and helpful place opens doors for the simultaneous teaching of love. As Ramsankar frequently emphasizes, "If we do not trust each other, we cannot love each other." The Alex Taylor staff place a daily emphasis on making loving contact with fellow human beings, regardless of their status in society, their ethnic background, or their individual problems. The primary method for teaching this principle is simple but profoundly powerful: all children and adults at the school learn to greet each other.

The greetings usually take place when children or adults enter or leave the school, but they may also occur throughout the day, especially when people look like they could use a hug. Although a welcome frequently results in an embrace, a greeting may simply be a handshake or a verbal salutation. No one is excluded: children, teachers, parents, custodians, and visitors must have their presence cordially acknowledged. According to Ramsankar:

> A hug or handshake in the morning exudes warmth and sets the tone for the day. Students need that kind of daily contact and affirmation. They need to know that we care about them, that they are important, and that we love them. Therefore, we must be consistent and do it daily. I believe that saying "hello" is a teaching activity.

Levinas has described visible and audible contact with others as "an exposure of being," and the ethical responsibilities implied in such encounters go beyond the being or will of any individual: they are signified on the basis of "the-one-for-the-other" (p. 80). During his research at Alex Taylor School for the past two years, Hart (1988) has described how the repeated attempts to greet and to recognize responsibility for the welfare of others have affected him:

> Ramsankar's meaning of "hello" is not the perfunctory greeting which many people thoughtlessly mumble; instead, it is an authentic invitation of concern extended to someone else. Whether accompanied by an embrace of the arms, the clasp of a handshake, a meeting of the eyes, or a pricking of the eardrums, an Alex Taylor "hello" is an attempt to open up or continue a conversation--a caring relationship--with another. (p. 6)

Thus, the teaching of love is re-defined at Alex Taylor as any daily tactile, visual, or auditory opportunity for everyone at the school to become mutually involved with and concerned about others.

The attempts to demonstrate love during one of the briefest of teaching moments--exchanging hellos--opens other ways of learning how to love others. If a child is having problems, the principal or teachers can often tell and find ways to help because they are continually trying to look and recognize each child as a unique individual. Students are taught to practice a buddy system of watching out for each other. If a student is ill, the buddy may take homework to his friend, thus showing concern for his charge. In turn, teachers as well as students look for ways to help in members of the community. Children write letters and visit lonely war veterans. The goal is to help each person to love their fellow human beings.

Celebrating Self-Esteem Needs

The quest for agape love concurrently reinforces the need for self-esteem. Ramsankar explains why:

> To me, the single most important area which we must address is that of

> self-esteem because if I don't feel good about myself, how can I feel good about you. At one time I was reluctant to say that I loved myself--that was being conceited. Today, I have changed my opinion--because if I do not love myself how could I love you.

Self-esteem involves reciprocal encouragement of the self and others. Teachers need to love themselves if they are going to teach children to have self-esteem. That is one of the reasons why students are not the only ones welcomed to school; teachers often need to be hugged or lovingly greeted just as much as students. The challenge of teaching self-esteem, therefore, means that each person in the school learns to feel good about his own talents, his accomplishments, and his level of mental health. It also means that each person learns to encourage others to feel good about themselves.

For the past 15 years, Ramsankar and the Alex Taylor staff have worked closely with Dr. Jim Battle, a well-known advocate of self-esteem and a clinical psychologist employed by the Edmonton Public Schools. In 1975 Battle piloted a program at Alex Taylor for testing a child's self-esteem, and this program is currently being used in schools in some 25 countries. From the results of his testing children at Alex Taylor, Battle has concluded, "We find that this school is enormously successful in increasing self-esteem" (Tyrwhitt, 1987, p. 83).

In order to understand how Ramsankar and his staff work to increase self-esteem, it is important to elaborate some of the basic principles described in Battle's book 9 To 19: Crucial Years For Self-esteem In Children And Youth. Battle maintains that a family environment which wants to foster self-esteem should provide the following conditions:

> *Unconditional positive regard*, as put forth by Rogers (1951), is a process in which parents communicate to their children that they are loved unconditionally. That is, they communicate to their children that caring for and prizing them is not contingent on any predetermined conditions. Children who have this from their parents realize that their parents love them at all times, even when they behave in a fashion that their parents consider to be inappropriate. (p. 61)

> *Encouragement*. Parents who encourage their children emphasize positives rather than negatives. They minimize the importance of children's mistakes while recognizing and helping to build their assets and strengths. (p. 62)

> *Reflective listening* is a process which involves grasping what the child feels and means, and then stating or reflecting this meaning in a fashion so that

> the child feels understood and accepted. Thus, the technique of reflective listening works as a sort of mirror that enables the child to see him or herself more clearly. (p. 63)

Battle believes these processes outline the ways parents should build the self-esteem of their children. He describes other actions for educators.

Ramsankar, however, has interpreted that "unconditional positive regard," "encouragement," and "reflective listening" form the foundation for how he and his teaching staff relate to Alex Taylor's family of children, parents, volunteers, and visitors. The daily greetings are, in a sense, a ritual demonstrating unconditional love. If students misbehave, the impropriety of the actions will be discussed and accounted for as quickly as possible, but when students pass teachers or the principal in the hall, they know that they will still receive a friendly, concerned greeting. The teacher may not have liked the behavior of a particular student, but the teacher still cares for the student as a person. The same principle applies to aides, volunteers or visitors. Everyone is welcomed back regardless of the time spent away from the school. According to Ramsankar's way of looking at building self-esteem:

> Each person is unique and is a very special human being. Each has strengths and weaknesses. To me it is morally wrong to dwell on the weaknesses of a fellow human being, but by capitalizing on the strengths of each individual, achievements are boundless.

Thus, the focus of unconditional love at Alex Taylor School is to look at the strengths of each person and, in so doing, to see the incredible worth and potential of each human being.

This does not imply that Ramsankar or his staff ignore problems. Part of the challenge of encouraging self-esteem is to work to make all things become stronger. For instance, if a student frequently instigates fights, then a plan is worked out with the individual for how that child can responsibly learn to control her or his temper. Like many human problems, the fighting may not immediately disappear, but if the child can begin to learn how to be friendlier and helpful to others and to reduce the number of fights, then that is a beginning and is recognized as a positive learning step.

From another perspective, if parents of immigrant children have poor self-

esteem because they cannot talk with their children about what they are learning at school, then the Alex Taylor answer is to invite the parents to come to the school and attend free language instruction. The school even provides day care services at the school so that parents who have small children can attend the English as a Second Language Program (ESL). The teaching of another language, the association with parents who face similar problems, and the opportunity to interact with the teachers of their children can help such parents improve their ability to communicate in an adopted tongue and to feel better about themselves and the education of their family. For the Alex Taylor staff, fostering self-esteem is a process of encouraging ongoing learning.

Reflective listening is one of many communication techniques which the Alex Taylor staff use each day. One writer (Tyrwhitt) described an occasion when a little girl was crying because her new coat had been dirtied; Ramsankar listened to the girl's concerns and assured her that Halleen Turner (the secretary) could get the stain out (p. 84). The child was not made to feel as if her concerns were unimportant; instead, the staff listened. Hart described an incident where a troubled Grade Five boy briefly stood by the seldom closed door of the principal's office, how the boy was quickly recognized, hugged, and invited in for a private conversation with Ramsankar. The boy never had to physically ask for help because Ramsankar's senses were open to listening and helping the child.

The openness for communication is further symbolized by a staff room which is always open for parents, children, visitors, and staff members to sit down, share a drink of milk, coffee, or tea, and to converse with each other. For the Alex Taylor staff, actively listening ears are vital for identifying, dealing with, and resolving problems and for creating an inviting, friendly atmosphere where everyone is made to feel welcome.

But the most important part of the Alex Taylor process for fostering self-esteem is celebrating strengths. Ramsankar (1988/1989) elaborates his meanings for celebration: "Every human being likes to be recognized. Recognition provides motivation, which can lead to high achievement and the elevation of self-esteem. Recognition is a form of

celebration (p. 5)." Thus, various means for celebrating accomplishments are continually being sought.

In a way, the frequent greetings in the hallways and classrooms are daily celebrations of each individual. During an exchange of hellos, opportunities are often found to recognize recent accomplishments: "How is my friend, who is doing better with his math" [said to a Grade One student who does not have five fingers on each hand]; "Phi just won an academic scholarship" [said to a graduate of Alex Taylor who has returned to help teach summer school classes]; "Francis is one of our hardest working parent volunteers" [said to one of the Native aides who is at the school nearly every day]. The purpose of such mini-celebrations is to acknowledge and praise strengths. Ramsankar emphasizes that "We have to look for strengths, even in failure times" (Landry, 1987, p. 37).

The weekly student assemblies (usually on Thursdays) are part of a more formal "symbolic ritual" (Sergiovanni, 1984) which is designed to celebrate the achievements of students. At these assemblies singing is an important part of celebrating. Patriotic anthems ("O Canada" and "God Save The Queen") serve as the invocation and benediction of the assembly; they help the children learn to honour their country (frequently a country which their parents have recently adopted). Songs of happiness (such as "If You Are Happy And You Know It Clap Your Hands," "Heads, Shoulders, Knees And Toes" or "I Love To Go A-Wandering") remind students of things which they can be thankful for and of the adventures which growing up can bring.

Prayer is said immediately after the singing of Canada's national anthem. The Lord's Prayer is recited by students, not as an attempt to convert people to Christianity, but to convey the importance of recognizing the vitality which the spiritual can give to education. Ramsankar tells why:

> I believe in a power that is greater than myself. I am sure that most people do. It does not matter whether we are Hindu, Moslem, Shinto, Buddhist, or Christian--we all can share the spiritual celebration of others' accomplishments.

The recited prayer, in this sense, is a reminder that each person, regardless of his religion

or his lack of religion, needs to search for ways to recognize and celebrate spiritual ways to journey the earth peacefully.

Teachers present the "Student of the Week Award" to students not just to recognize academic excellence. Awards are presented for such things as listening well, trying harder, loving, caring, sharing, consistent or improved attendance, demonstrating responsible citizenship, or responsibly completing homework assignments. Those selected as "Students of the Week" are presented with a certificate, photographed, and their pictures are displayed in the hallway. Children's birthdays are also recognized. On special occasions, such as the yearly graduation assembly, students who have completed six years of schooling are especially honoured.

Recognition, though, does not always have to be the reception of a formal certificate or a special occasion: it can be as simple as one of the students bringing a kitten to the assembly and sharing the joy of talking about and caressing the pet with their peers and teachers. Even though an assembly is held every week, there is never a drought for being able to recognize accomplishments or talents or precious possessions. Instead, these weekly assemblies remind the teachers to be on the lookout for ways to award and praise the students in their classes.

Informing students of the school's activities and calendar of events at the assemblies allows everyone to know what is happening at their school and to recognize the accomplishments of various groups: the school choir, the hand bell choir, the school's Cub Scout and Brownie programs, or the Big Brothers or Big Sisters groups. Announcements about school activities may invite new students to participate in these groups, or the information may simply encourage the children to look forward to the times when they can participate in field trips to the zoo, a football game, a school exchange program with a sister school in Banff, or the March 1989 trip to Trinidad by the Grade Six class.

Welcoming visitors is a regular part of the assembly ritual. Almost every week a uniformed policeman visits the school and blends discussions about traffic safety, personal safety in the neighborhood, or drug abuse and alcoholism with demonstrations of

friendship and fun. Other special guests, such as the Prime Minister of Trinidad, federal and provincial politicians, judges, lawyers, businessmen, former students who have graduated from high school or university, university researchers, and service groups attend and speak at the assemblies. These school assemblies help the children recognize the importance of such people as the police in their lives. They learn that police are human beings who preserve law and order and care for the welfare of the community. Students also have the opportunity to interact with important people in the community: to recognize and be recognized by them.

It is not only very important speakers, however, who are recognized at the weekly assembly. Parents frequently attend, often bringing younger children with them. Each attending parent and child is introduced to the assembly. Every person is considered of importance. For instance, at the beginning of the 1988 Alex Taylor Summer School, the new custodian offered to answer the telephone while the rest of the staff attended the assembly, but Ramsankar's immediate reply was, "No, the phone calls can wait; it is more important that you be introduced to the children." This new custodian came to understand that his presence in the school merited recognition.

The researchers Haggerson, Macagnoni, and Ramsankar (1987, 1988) made a similar discovery: "We realized that this weekly event was an experience that most of the children eagerly anticipated. They expected us to stop and speak with them. They expected verbal response and gesture and affirmation" (p. 163). The weekly assembly is an opportunity for children and adults to interact with each other and nurture relationships with each other. It is a weekly celebration of present and potential strengths.

A similar ritual occurs each week (usually on Tuesdays) for senior citizens. Prayers of thankfulness are offered for the food; seniors are informed of events happening at the school for both themselves and the children; guests are welcomed and often invited to speak; and children are invited to help in the serving of the food. While the seniors are usually not encouraged to sing, humour serves as a type of impromptu singing. Usually Ramsankar reiterates some of his favorite jokes, although Frank Sklove (a 1918 graduate

of Alex Taylor School who actively supports the school) has taken to writing new jokes for Ramsankar. The dinner for senior citizens reminds that remembering the past is a heritage important to the present and future.

Other planned and impromptu celebrations occur throughout the year. Each month staff members' or volunteers' birthdays are acknowledged with birthday cake, a gift (such as a flower), and a song in the staff room. The seniors hold Bingo games regularly, with food (instead of money) as prizes. They also meet for activities such as shuffleboard, carpet bowling, or informal parties. In October, a neighboring high school organizes a Halloween party for the children, distributing free candy and supervising challenging games. Christmas is a busy time for concerts and gift packages for each of the children. Seniors have been treated to free dinners on Boxing Day and New Year's Day for the past nine years. During the long winter season, such ideas as "Cabin Fever Day" (Tyrwhitt) may be invented to encourage students to dress up and put on a talent show. Every Spring, the police prepare a free pancake breakfast at the school; they play games with the children, and they take them for rides on their motorcycles.

The highlight of the school year for the past 19 years has been the celebration of the Chinese New Year, usually in early February. Over 400 parents and guests attend a free dinner meeting. The Mayor of the City is often present and invited to speak, along with representatives from the federal parliament and the provincial legislature. Prominent school board members and officers, federal judges, and church leaders are present. Expressions of good will are phrased in Chinese, and Chinese customs are reviewed. Children and volunteers prepare numerous displays of Chinese myths or symbols, and many children dress ethnically.

After the dinner, the children stage a performance of plays, singing, and oriental musical numbers by the choir and hand bell choir, choral speech readings, ribbon dances, stick dances, and the lion dance. In the course of one evening, Alex Taylor School brings together political leaders, businessmen, officials, educators, parents, senior citizens, and children. A large city is transformed into an integrated community which participates in

what Sergiovanni (1984) has described as "culture building" and the "practicing of purposing" (p. 9). Through this cultural celebration, children and adults learn to understand and love one another.

Actualizing Hopes For Miracles

The underlying hope for meeting the human needs of trust, love, and self-esteem is to encourage the possibilities for being and becoming uniquely yet responsibly human. Such a hope searches for discoveries about the reasons for living. Ramsankar articulates that the fundamental hope of his philosophy is:

> I believe that every person was created by God and that each person has a God-given purpose for living. Part of my purpose as an educator is to help others discover their divine yet individual purposes for living.

This hope echoes Frankel's transcendental search for personal meanings of living, "He who has a *why* to live can bear with almost any *how*" (p. 76). Such philosophy assumes that children and adults can realize accomplishments, goals, and quests. Both can actualize miracles of educational growth by helping each other discover individual purposes for living.

The miracles of actualization often can take a considerable amount of time and may appear very insignificant to outsiders. Ramsankar, for example, relates how many members of Native population who lived in the neighborhood refused to come near the school or to encourage their children to attend school. Much of their time was wasted with a life of drugs, alcoholism, prostitution, or gambling. He and his staff reached out, however, and began to develop a sense of trust with them. After several years of showing friendship, a few Natives started coming into the school and the staff room. Ramsankar, in turn, encouraged them to work as volunteers and paid them an honorarium, which began to lift their self-esteem in their own eyes and the eyes of their children. For the past nine years, about ten Natives have helped as volunteers and aides. They are discovering dignified purposes for living.

In working with adults, the actualizing hopes are for the present and the near future; children, however, connote a greater hope for the 21st century. Marlene Poloway

the Community School Coordinator at Alex Taylor, explains her visions for the hope which children represent:

> Today's youth are the ones who will alter prejudice that has been in existence for hundreds of years. Youth exchanges and the integration of youth from all parts of the world into our school have given our youth valuable education about the similarities they all share. It is through these similarities that common goals will be established. Through this, an appreciation for the uniqueness of others will develop. (Ramsankar, 1987, p. 6)

From Poloway's comments, the purposes underlying the Alex Taylor curriculum are made more clear. Children are fed, clothed, groomed, loved, and helped to feel good about themselves and others not as ends in and of themselves--these actions foreshadow how future adults can live responsibly and "learn to walk the earth edifyingly together" (Aoki).

In a world which is multicultural and will continue to become more so (Council For Cultural Cooperation, 1986), the children are the hope for a world where human beings can love, care, and reach out to others with understanding, peace, and love. Faith in the future achievements of children is the reason why Henry Adams could say "A teacher affects eternity; he/she can never tell where his/her influence stops" (Peter, 1977, p. 464).

Conclusion

Previous studies have attempted various ways to describe the animation of Alex Taylor Community School: Haggerson, Macagnoni, and Ramsankar (1988) emphasized the words "Aliveness: the spirit of well-being" (p. 180); the WCCI (1985) videotape emphasized the "Multicultural Approach To Citizenship And Educating The Total Child"; the CBC Man Alive television program characterized the school as "a loving place"; the ACCESS (1988) videotape explored how education at Alex Taylor is approached as a "partnership" with the community; Tyrwhitt focused on the leadership of "A loving principal" (p. 80). What these previous analyses and this present study are attempting to find is a way to talk about the spiritual foundation which underlies the ethos of Alex Taylor Community School.

Huebner (1985) has suggested that there are no direct ways of knowing the spiritual: only indirect ways of knowing and testifying of it. What is most important about

Alex Taylor may be impossible to adequately describe in words. At the very least this paper is another attempt to witness how Alex Taylor School has changed the lives of many students, teachers, aides, parents, volunteers, and researchers for the better. As the Chancellor of the University of Alberta (Miller, 1988) expressed in a letter to Ramsankar informing him that he would receive an Honorary Degree of Doctor of Laws:

> The Senate has chosen to honor a person whose work as a gifted and dedicated teacher and humanitarian has enriched the lives of so many children and adults; and who has brought a sense of dignity and purpose to many whose future might otherwise have been without hope or promise.

"A Case Study of Alex Taylor Community School" Revisited

"O the sisters of mercy they are not
Departed or gone,
They were waiting for me when I thought
That I just can't go on,
And they brought me their comfort
And later they brought me this song.
O I hope you run into them
You who've been travelling so long." (Cohen, 1967, ["Sisters of Mercy"])

Forward

With respect to my personal teaching career, the people of the Alex Taylor Community School have served as my incarnate "Sisters of Mercy." At a time when I literally thought that I could not go on, people such as Dr. Steve Ramsankar, Virginia Yankowski, Marlene Poloway, Halleen Turner brought me the comfort of their hope and renewed my desire to keep creating and telling tales about purposes and activities for education. When I had completed the early draft of this paper, I sent it to a colleague-friend and wrote: "For me, at least, this paper is a very important piece. It is one which I hope can help me frame my educational practice once I return to teaching" (April 8, 1989). I still stand by that statement. In revisiting our case study, therefore, I find that I am re-strengthened for further educative challenges.

The Need For A More Human Education

The foundation for much educational research and teacher training in North America has been the behavioristic assumptions of "effective schools" literature. According to Hunter (1984), professional competence of teachers "is based on what a

teacher *does*, not what a teacher *is*" (p. 1). This approach to education deliberately ignores questions about the worth of a person's *being*, objectifying teachers as a "what" not a "who." The reason for such a reductive distortion is likely the difficulties of defining and transforming "what" is inside a person. It is much easier and more financially profitable to talk only about making everyone's observable behaviors the same instead of recognizing and nurturing uniqueness. But there are also important reasons to search for understandings and explanations to the enigmatic questions of "Who *are* teachers?" and "Who can they *become*?"

This means that in addition to learning effective teaching behaviors, educators, both new and older, should be searching for what it means to live and teach on the margins of their possibilities. Aoki affirmed this idea during his 1988 convocation address at The University of Lethbridge: "We need to learn what it means to sing the song of inspiritedness. We can do so by studying those who are living on the edge and what they do." Aoki's counsel reinforces the importance of asking questions of being, and it suggests that an approach for such inquiry is to identify and study those who "sing" about the edges of living. By coming to understand how a particular person has been able to live life intensely--what Campbell (1987) has described as the archetype of learning to "follow one's bliss"--others may find some clues for how they can individually pursue meaningful lives.

My Personal Relationship With A Singer of Delight

I first became aware of Steve Ramsankar via the television broadcast of the CBC Man Alive program in October 1985. As I watched that film, I was deeply touched by the idea of school as "A Loving Place." In fact, I cried. But, other than a few comments and queries about Steve with colleagues, I randomly tucked him away in my brain along with myriads of other television images. I went on my way pursuing a master's degree in education and, at the same time, seriously pondering whether I should give up my involvement with the teaching profession.

The following year, I experienced a life-changing event, a "heuristic encounter"

(Haggerson, 1987), when I happened to attend an unscheduled conference presentation by Steve at the Eighth Conference on Curriculum Theory and Classroom Practice in Dayton, Ohio. Shortly before the close of his session, I asked if those who wanted a hug might receive one from him. He assented. While several of us were waiting in line to collect our hugs, one lady said to me, "I am glad you asked your question because I wanted a hug too." Her comment helped me realize that this Gandhi-heighted principal was not only lovingly touching the lives of the students in his small school but also the love-starved lives of a larger adult community of parents, teachers, and professionals.

Later that same evening, I discovered that Steve literally is an inspirited singer. Initially, he individually sang "O Canada," followed by "God Bless America." But soon, a whole chorus of us were singing "She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain" or "I've Been Working On The Railroad," along with other campfire songs, Harry Belefonte calypso songs, and any popular songs we could remember. We sang until nearly 2:00 a. m. Finally, Steve said that he wanted to sing us one last solo:

> May the good Lord Bless and keep you, whether near or far away, may you find that long awaited golden day today. May your troubles all be small ones, and your fortune ten times ten, may the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again. May you walk with sunlight shining, and a bluebird in ev'ry tree, may there be a silver lining, back of ev'ry cloud you see. Fill your dreams with sweet tomorrows, never mind what might have been. May the good Lord bless and keep you till we meet again. (Willson, 1977, p. 277)

The words of that song penetrated my disenchantment with teaching like a soothing prayer, giving me a re-invigorated strength to return to my teaching responsibilities and to continue a career in education. Before the 1986 Bergamo Conference, I could not remember the last time I had sung for enjoyment. It is now a more common yet mysterious aspect of my daily living which reminds me not to dwell on problems of the individual self but to search continually for my choral connections and responsibilities to others.

In the Spring of 1987, I applied and was accepted to a doctoral program in education. Part of the reason why I selected the University of Alberta was that it allowed me the opportunity to work in Edmonton with Steve. Instead of remaining a "Phantom Of

Delight" (Wordsworth, 1959) in my memory, I wanted to see Steve "upon a nearer view," as a "spirit, yet a [man] too," and eventually to help myself and others to be more able to "see with eye serene" who this "being breathing thoughtful breath" really is.

Implementing A Reflective Inquiry

In September 1987, I approached Steve about the possibility of writing an autobiography with him, and he agreed to allow me to work with him on this project. As I began visiting Alex Taylor School and collecting data for the autobiography, I began to see a need for more background work prior to writing the autobiography. Previous studies (Macagnoni & Haggerson, 1985; Haggerson, Macagnoni, & Ramsankar, 1987; Tyrwhitt; Haggerson, 1988) had focussed on interpretations of the essential characteristics, such as "aliveness," "spirit," "loving," or "actions." Each work helped describe what happened at Alex Taylor School, but the language used for each description was not the same as the words I heard Steve use in describing his vision of leadership to the students and teachers at Alex Taylor. I found myself wondering whether Steve's "personal practical knowledge" (Clandinin) could be defined by using more of Steve's actual vocabulary. My aim for such a study was not to persuade other teachers to think or perform the same behaviors as Steve; instead, I hoped to provide a detailed analysis of how Steve, himself, frames his vision and actions of leadership. Thus, I proposed that for a while we should concentrate on writing a naturalistic overview of Steve's instructional leadership.

Steve agreed to a schedule of six participant-observation (Spradley, 1979, 1980) visitations over a four week period. Attempting to adopt the field procedures of Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL) (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert; Barnett, 1985), I shadowed Steve for over 20 hours, taking detailed field notes during each shadow. A variety of Steve's interactions were observed: a school dinner for senior citizens; daily interactions with children, staff, and public during mornings and afternoons; an evening parents' meeting; planning sessions with the secretary; a meeting and lunch with the Brownie volunteers; a class graduation and school awards assembly; the first day of a new school term; staff meetings; and an interview and filming for a city television broadcast. Steve

was unexpectedly called away only once, the morning I observed the regular Thursday morning school assembly, but even when he was absent, I sensed that routine activities carried on as if he were actually present. I was able to confirm this impression when I observed him conduct a subsequent assembly and noted how similar the formats for each were.

I did not conduct reflective interviews immediately after each shadow, as the PAL methodology suggests, but I did ask Steve to reflect on some of my observations and questions as time permitted during my shadowing of him. Or, I would ask him follow-up questions during our next shadowed observation. I also continued to collect examples of speeches which Steve had given when attending conferences. These formed a base of Steve's written reflections and observations. Finally, I assembled all of the data and began the task of clustering images and themes into a preliminary model of a PAL personal case study.

I shared a preliminary draft with Steve for his review and critique. This initiated a process of rewriting, revising, and editing. Steve taught me that a document for public presentation requires considerable time, careful review, and critical assistance from others. Steve had at least four readers provide feedback and recommendations about our study. After five months of revisions and reflective interviews, we reached a consensus on a version. It was not totally in Steve's own words, which are rich in images for teaching children and parents, nor was it entirely in my style of writing, which tends to organize actions and ideas by playing with the sounds and meanings of words. Nevertheless, we both believed that our case study did express significant aspects about Steve's work which had not been articulated in previous studies: his reflections about 20 years of administrative practice, his knowledge of community programs for an inner-city school, and his vision for future multicultural education.

Small Things That Count As A Teacher

In personally assaying what is most important about our case study, I would have to say that Steve taught me to take a renewed look at the small details of teaching. His

belief that "saying 'hello' is a teaching activity" (Chapter 5, p. 114) is one which I experienced every time I have visited his school: I was always welcomed with arms that hugged and ears that listened and cared about the tone of my hello. After two years of working with Steve, those daily greetings end up meaning more to me than the scores of assemblies, awards, dinners, programs, and activities that happened at Alex Taylor School. The staging of "big" events is not what is most significant about Steve's work from my perspective. Instead, the small daily interactions serve as the daily glue that holds everything together and makes his teaching-administrative leadership come alive.

Perhaps I can illustrate Steve's inherent dedication to teaching by relating an incident which was not included in our collaborative paper but which occurred on the first day of my shadowing Steve. During the school's dinner for senior citizens, one of the visiting guests leaned close to him and quietly asked, "How many teachers do you have on staff?" Steve's immediate reply was, "Counting myself, eight." As I reflect on Steve's answer, I am impressed that it came so naturally and quickly after 19 years of occupying a leadership position. At the time that he made it, he was not responsible for teaching any specific groups of students. Yet when asked to define teaching, he still counted himself as a teacher.

I checked how another principal would answer the same question, and she responded that she had "5.7 teachers at her school." The administrative way of funding schooling affected how this individual defined who teachers were. According to budgetary restrictions, this second administrator thought that only the part of herself that taught two afternoon classes and a part of another person on staff who taught a morning kindergarten class were fractions of teachers. And, if this particular principal had been working in a school which did not require that she teach part of the time, then, she may not have included herself at all in a count of teachers.

Another interesting difference which emerges in comparing these two administrative responses is that Steve's number of teachers was stated in whole numbers. According to his school budget, Steve actually received funding for 6.8 teachers in 1987-

88. Yet when talking to a guest, he preferred to count in terms of whole persons. While the method of funding forced him to count with a decimal point, Steve tended to think in wholes: each staff member, whether full-time or fractional, is a complete teacher just as he as a non-teaching principal is still a teacher. In my personal experience, the power and responsibilities of principalship frequently set up invisible lines of demarcation between administrators and teachers. By the ways in which he personally conceptualized his and other's roles at school, Steve seemed able to cut between some of those barriers.

I have repeated this brief incident because it serves as a personal teaching mnemonic for me. First, it reminds me how important it is to "count myself" as a teacher. Certain people, such as the principal who maintained that by attending university I had "lost contact with teaching," may want a very narrow definition of *teaching*: one which admits only those actively practicing their trade in elementary or secondary classrooms. According to this kind of constricted interpretation, even school administrators would be excluded from the teaching domain. It will never be possible to control how others build isolating walls around their particular dominions, but it is possible for me to make an existential choice of how I think of myself. Thus, like Steve, I count myself a teacher.

Steve's method of counting--in whole numbers--prompts me not to be trapped by letter-grades or percentages. Numbers and graded symbols seem to be able to say a great deal in the society that longs for quantitative representations. But grades and numbers can never adequately express the worth of an individual or their talents. In spite of the necessity for teachers, and administrators to evaluate the development of others and, in many cases, to attach a grade to their evaluation, I believe that the more important teaching challenge is to understand relationships (whether with colleagues or pupils or parents or visitors) in terms of "whole persons." And one of the ways by which I can strive to look for wholeness in my relationships with others is to count small things--even a voiced or voiceless exchange of "hellos" or three word replies to a visitor's question--as treasured teaching moments with beings of incalculable worth.

Renewing My Vision

In reflecting how Steve has changed my outlook, at this time I would say that he has renewed my teacher's vision. This renewal began when I heard him define his philosophy of education: "Part of my purpose as an educator is to help others discover their divine yet individual purposes for living" (Chapter 5, p. 123). Every child and adult has God-given reasons for existing, but they must uncover their individual meanings for themselves. A teacher cannot give another their meanings for living, but a teacher can help by faithfully and lovingly inviting them to step onto their own thresholds of possibilities. This vision is the cornerstone to Steve's approach to education.

Building on his clearly defined purpose, Steve has dedicated his life to serving the community that attends Alex Taylor School. And he has accomplished many significant educative acts in his 20 years at Alex Taylor School: nutritious snacks for hungry children; food and clothing for needy families; language education for parents; supportive community relationships with the police; nutritious dinners for the elderly; a community school which serves as a family for multicultural needs, celebrations, and education. Each of these and many other achievements have required a great deal of time, effort, help, and sacrifice. On several occasions, as I observed and reflected with Steve, I have worried about his health. Somehow, he always kept serving others as much as he was able, but the needs of the community never abated.

As a result, much remains to be done. The problems which society faces each day--hunger, crime, brutality, neglect, war--cannot be answered by one individual but by many people who learn to understand what their respective purposes and responsibilities are within the contexts in which they live. I cannot be another Steve Ramsankar. Nor can I simply replicate his approach to education at another school site. To read our case study with such an imitative hope is, for me, a gross misinterpretation. We did not write together to laud Steve's successes nor to encourage others to be exactly the same as he is. Purposes and actions can and should vary just as the people and their surrounding world are always changing.

Consequently, I must learn to live with the universal constant of individual

difference: "Every person who has ever lived has lived an unbroken succession of unique occasions" (Wilder, 1976, p. x). This means that the key value which I see in Steve's philosophy of discovering "divine yet individual purposes for living" is that it challenges me to choose responsible reasons and means for living together with others. This is not something that can be done easily. Fackenheim (1961) likens the dilemmas involved in making such choices to a fictional character created by Kafka who spends his entire life attempting to find out from others if the course of life he is pursuing is the right one; it is not until the character is dying that he discovers that no one could ever have verified the appropriateness of his life's path because "There is only one right road for a man, and that he cannot know whether it is right except by embarking upon it" (p. 89). My work with Steve repeatedly motivates me to embark onward.

Talk To Learn: An Action Research Unfolding

By Charles Hart And Kathy Smith[3]

Introduction

Contrary to the adage, talk is not cheap. Talking is the vital language link needed by youth and adults to discover their individual and collective voices for learning. Infants and young children are expected and encouraged to think actively through talk: to try unfamiliar words and to combine words into creative phrases and sentences. They talk to learn.

School, however, changes both the modes and the definitions of learning. Frequently, reading replaces talk. Interactions among students and between the teacher and the student often diminish as accurate interpretation of written texts becomes a top priority. In some classrooms, learning to write follows a pattern of not saying something original through writing but of accurately representing conventions and information which have been taught. "Learners" are viewed as "receivers, not senders" (Graves, 1984, p. 63).

Unfortunately, the excitement and vigor evident in youthful talk is not recovered

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[3]This article originally appeared in the Spring 1989/1990, issue of Alberta English, 6 (1), 14-17.

by many students and teachers. The recitation of accepted knowledge becomes more important than communicating thoughts and questions. This article is written because the authors uncovered talk as the fundamental process for active learning through the unfolding developments of an action research study.

The Initial Action Research Explorations

Kathy Smith (a language arts coordinator at Clover Bar Junior High School) and Charles Hart (a University of Alberta doctoral student) chose an action research methodology (Kemmis & McTaggart; Carr & Kemmis) because it advocated that research be closely linked with practice.

At first, the purpose of our study was "to explore ways that evaluation of teachers, curriculum (specifically language arts), and students can be improved through a qualitative evaluation approach" (February 17, 1989). Some of our proposed action steps were to talk with colleagues about their views, to review literature on evaluation, and to focus on a Grade 7 class where Kathy was teaching writing with a "Writer's Workshop" (Atwell, 1987) methodology.

Our monitoring techniques involved Charles acting as a *researching friend* by observing instruction, interviewing students, and being included in Kathy's teacher evaluation conferences. Both Kathy and Charles agreed to exchange research journals with each other, and our ensuing journal dialogue extended our abilities to talk with each other reflectively.

Reflectively Circling To A Second Plan

Initially, Kathy relied upon Charles to guide the action research steps: *planning*, *acting*, *observing*, and *reflecting*. After the first month, the research reached a critical stage when Charles admitted that he did not know what they should do next. In response, Kathy acknowledged that she had also been feeling uneasy about her role in the project and was more relieved than disturbed by Charles' confession of ignorance. In fact, she even named the development--*circling*.

Circling was a concept she had gleaned from the text Write To Learn. Murray

(1984) maintains that one way for a writer to find focus is to "circle":

> Experienced writers recognize that the feelings of confusion and despair are normal.... To find the focus, the key that will unlock the meaning in the mess, the writer circles the raw material.... The important thing is to keep seeing the material anew. (p. 58)

Murray's principle of circling became a metaphor for how we should proceed.

As we reflectively circled back on ideas which we had recorded in our journals, we determined that understanding evaluation as a process was our most important reason for conducting the research. Having recognized this aim, Kathy wrote:

> One thing that has become clearer is the reason I want to visit other teacher's classrooms--I would like the opportunity to observe student evaluation as a process, as collaborative negotiation. One vehicle that would allow me more accessibility to collaborative negotiation with students is the conference. Another reinforcement is that this year we are going to publish anthologies of student writing. (March 5)

From this journal entry emerged the outline of a second plan: (1) to strive for *collaborative negotiation* with respect to teacher and student evaluation; (2) to use *conferences* as a vehicle for collaboration; (3) to search for ways to *celebrate* (publish) accomplishments.

Toward A Questioning Of "Learning"

Our second cycle of research began with Kathy developing a thematic reading-writing unit on "Friends and Enemies." A variety of conference styles were an integral part of this unit: individual goal-setting conferences with the teacher as well as individual and group conferences with the teacher and peers. Each type of conference was an attempt to encourage collaboration with and among students and to celebrate their writing.

Concurrently, we hoped to link our work with students with the principal's scheduled evaluation of Kathy's teaching. Kathy arranged a pre-conference with her principal. Since the principal also taught a Grade 7 language arts class, she thought that observing Kathy teach her new unit would offer the principal an opportunity to gain some ideas about teaching her students. In a reciprocal gesture, Kathy was subsequently invited to observe and provide feedback to the principal about her instruction. The

principal's willingness to explain her expectations for the evaluation prompted Kathy to reflect:

> I am looking forward to my own evaluation with some interest and little anxiety as yet. I know that I won't be surprised because the administrator and I will conference beforehand. This is a real anxiety-reducing factor. I think evaluation becomes a much less difficult process, and takes away much of the "event" element, if it is couched in talk. I like the idea of interaction in evaluation. (April 9)

If Kathy had not honestly communicated her desires for a pre-conference discussion, it is not likely that she would have felt the confidence to make such a journal entry. We were learning that an evaluation is likely to be more successful if both parties interactively communicate what they believe is important with each other both before and during the evaluation process.

Charles continued his weekly observations of the Grade 7 class, and he prepared a form requesting parental consent to interview students. Twelve students (nearly 50% of the class) were approved for interviews. The most dramatic discovery which emerged from our review of their transcripts was that 8 students said that they "learned the best" by "listening to the teacher." When asked whether conferences with other students helped them learn, a typical response of 6 students was "Conferences don't help you learn as much as they help you get new ideas for whatever you are writing" (April 4).

Such statements by half of the interviewed students helped us realize that many students had a teacher-oriented definition of learning. When we checked a dictionary, we found that it defined *learn* similarly: "to acquire knowledge of a subject or matter; to receive instruction" (Allen, 1985, p. 156). This helped us identify one of the roots of our problem in evaluating teaching as a process: even a reputable dictionary defined *learn* as a passive reception of information about a subject. Our curricular experience with a whole language approach to writing caused us as teachers, however, to equate learning as a process for developing personal ideas and encouraging active thinking. We needed to communicate to students, and adults as well, that learning in language arts is more than passive regurgitation of accepted knowledge.

Unfolding Implications Of Talk

As we reviewed the importance of communicative interactions between the administrator and the teacher as a prerequisite to evaluating and nurturing creative teaching and reflected on ways to help students value personal thinking, we uncovered the primacy of one language activity--*talking*.

The power of talk did not present itself as a dramatic series of events but initiated and permeated the processes of conferencing, collaborating, and even aspects of our celebrating. For instance, it was through our reflections on teacher evaluation that we began to understand that it was not the ritual of the pre-conference that resulted in a strong working relationship with the principal; instead, it was more a combination of informal conversations (talking about preparing a new Grade 7 reading/writing unit) and formal requests (Kathy asking for a pre-conference, or the principal asking Kathy if she would agree to have her instructional activities videotaped) which preceded, followed, and occurred during the entire evaluation process. The success of the process was largely due to an administrator and teacher honestly talking with each other about their concerns for improving teaching.

We should point out that in addition to the formal evaluation of Kathy, formative relationships developed through informal talk. After Charles had worked in the school for two months, another teacher expressed interest in learning more about action research and invited Charles to meet with her during a lunch break. This conversation led to an invitation to observe two classes taught by this teacher, which opened a dialogue on qualities of effective instruction. On a larger scale, after-class discussions about ways to celebrate writing enabled us to involve all the Grade 7 language arts teachers and over 130 Grade 7 students in a poetry workshop.

Parallel to our work with teachers, we found that our attitudes toward working with children were changing. In her journal, Kathy described how her outlook had altered:

> I believe that already I can see obvious changes, in attitudes (mine and others) and in potentialities. My students have become individual people to me, people that can teach as well as learn. Colleagues also offer ways in which I can grow as well as teach. (May 20)

Such a view affected the way we interacted with students. We tried to provide more opportunities for teacher-student conferences and to engage in "expressive language" (Britton, 1970) dialogues through exchanging journals with students. We structured more class time for student-student conferences as a means of encouraging students to express their interests and their goals. We began allowing children more choice of what they were to read and write. First and foremost, though, we became committed to teaching students with more opportunities for talking with us and with their peers.

But we must point out that a commitment to teach with more talk is not a panacea. Our interviews with students at the end of our project helped us understand some of the rewards and difficulties of implementing more talking. Nearly all the interviewed students, 10 of 12, maintained that they had gained a greater appreciation for the importance of personal feelings and ideas from the unit on "Friends and Enemies." One student clearly enunciated a change of attitude: "I think that it is important that students have part of an influence on what they are going to be doing in the classroom; instead of just having to do what the teacher says they are to do" (May 26).

Exactly how to achieve such a shift in outlook toward learning for every student was not clear. Each student had different problems and ideas on how they could learn better. One student wanted to "have more group conferences" with a particular group, while another thought that conference groups should be changed more often "just to get other people's opinions and stuff" (May 26). One student claimed that the unit "Friends and Enemies" was not "worthwhile," yet this same student cited one of the essays written during the unit as one of the best examples of that student's personal writing for the entire year. One of the briefest interviews was with a student who had difficulties working in groups. When asked how the teaching of the unit could have been improved or what this student had learned, this student's typical reply was, "It is kind of hard to say" (May 26).

Talking Toward Shared Learning

After eight months of action, research, and reflection our only definitive

conclusion is that administrators, teachers, students, and parents need to keep searching for ways to talk openly with each other. As long as we could converse frankly with others during our research project, we had faith that shared learning was possible. At the same time, however, we had to admit that simply talking about a concern had not allowed us to obtain every change in the teacher or student evaluation processes which we had wanted, nor were there easy answers for how to best use talk in every context, and frequently it was "hard to say" just what the problem was which kept administrators or teachers or students from honestly communicating with each other.

As we reflected on both the power and problems inherent with *talk*, Britton's reminder to teachers helped us:

> We cannot afford to underestimate the value of language as a means of organizing and consolidating our accumulated experience, or its value as a means of interacting with people and objects to create experience; nor can we, on the other hand, afford to ignore the limits of its role in the total pattern of human behavior. (pp. 278-279)

From our perspective, many theorists and practitioners underestimate talk as a vital process of language. Graves and Murray privilege writing. Madeline Hunter believes that supervisory pre-conferences are a "waste of time" because she has already determined what good teaching is before she ever walks into a particular teacher's room (Garman, Glickman, Hunter, & Haggerson, 1987, p. 161). Some teachers seem to think that an event such as a professional development day or that a programmed approach which outlines what teachers should say to students each day are the "events" which will resolve educational dilemmas. Talk is discounted because it seems commonplace, unnecessary, or imprecise.

Our experiences during our research, though, reminded us that learning and literacy not only begin with a child's "oracy" (Alberta Education, 1982a) but that we must continue to use talk, in spite of its imperfections, in order to make sense of listening, writing, reading, viewing. For example, expressive modes of writing, such as dialogue journals and friendly letters, often imitate talk in the sense that problems can be considered in a trusting environment which allows the writer to risk sharing opinions and

not feel threatened by freezing feelings into gradable or publishable words. Nor is talking merely a means of providing information or for collaborating with others: assuming a "participant role" (Britton) of using language; talking also means spending time thinking through, around, and under an idea via fun talk, gossip, chit-chat, or pleasurable circling talk: vocalizing the "spectator role." Talking, then, implies receiving as well as sending, consolidating as well as interacting, poeticizing as well as transacting: repeatedly trying to express one's voice--one's personal essence--as a part of the world.

Consequently for us, talk symbolizes a commitment to use whole language processes and roles in order to fathom the mysteries of one's own being in relation to one's responsibilities for others. Such a metaphor enables us to argue that neither evaluation of teachers nor instruction and evaluation of students should be a monologue of authoritative ideas and events: instead, the educative quest is toward "authentic dialogue where personality is developed" (Gusdorf, 1965, p. 125). In order to discover the possibilities of what each individual voice can be in a world of social relationships and curricular hopes, instructional relationships with students and school system relationships with teachers need to strive to create environments which nurture talking to learn.

Talk To Learn Revisited

"The door
Was closed at
First, open only
To a precious few.
One day a foot got in
Not letting the door close;
S L O W L Y
The door was pried open bit by bit
And became a very popular door for many feet,
But in time, even the foot that held the door open
Grew tired and did not like that door anymore.
The door also grew tired of so many feet.
Its entry was too common and crowded.
A world full of laughter and life
Was now just a world of nothing.
And the first foot withdrew.
And the door slammed.
Closed again,
Forever?" (Gaglione & Hogan)

Forward

My doctoral studies have involved my knocking upon and attempting to open myriads of doors. This is one of the reasons I was attracted the poem "The Door," written by Jackie Gaglione and Tammi Hogan, two Grade 9 students in one of Kathy Smith's language arts classes.[4] Some doors have mysteriously opened for me; in some cases openings magically appeared where there had been only walls. In other instances, doors opened for a while and then closed again. Other doors have remained tightly closed. At times, I have learned much from closed doors: their refusals to admit have increased my appetite to find other openings. So, as the world presently talks about closing some of the armed doors of the past and opening the skies for peaceful "fly-overs," I am also searching for ways to open educators' doors for collaborative *learn-overs*.

In the cases of the collaborative field work with the educators whom I have described in this chapter, I encountered three open doors. And each one of their doors signify different instructional experiences to me. Steve Ramsankar's office door was almost always open; whoever passed by was welcomed in, and their requests or concerns were considered and acted upon. In working with Dale Ripley, I gained access to classroom doors of St. Gerard School via the principal's door; whenever Dale called a collaborative meeting with teachers, they attended. My opportunity to enter Kathy Smith's classroom did not begin at front door of the school but behind the thresholds of university classes which we both attended from 1987 to 1988. Our interactions as students helped form a friendly foundation for our collaboration described in the paper "Talk To Learn." When Kathy extended invitations for teachers to work with us, they did not feel much reason to do so. The doors, even the principal's door, opened "S L O W L Y" at first, but bit by bit we were able to interest other educators in a reflective door which we had helped push open.

In revisiting "Talk To Learn," I find that it still excites my thinking. I do not

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[4]Excerpts from the poem "The Door" are published in this dissertation for the first time with the written permission of Jackie Gaglione and Tammi Hogan, 1990)

believe everything the way that we expressed it in our paper--my vocabulary for talking with other educators has changed the most since we wrote that paper. I am also searching for an appropriate language of practice that does not lead to overgeneralization. Most importantly, though, I am continuing my efforts to search for answers. In this sense, the paper which Kathy and I wrote is best viewed as simply a signpost of where we were and a commitment to move on in opening other educational doors.

"Collaborative Inquiry" Not "Research"

When I presented our "Talk To Learn" paper at The University of Lethbridge Research Seminar Series (1989), the primary critique of most of the academics in attendance was that our collaborative efforts should not be called "research." Several audience members suggested that we might want to call what we had done a "pilot study," which we could now follow-up with a more legitimate "research" design. Some people were disturbed that Kathy and I had known each other prior to our study. In their minds, such contact contaminated the objectivity of the work. Our entire framework was inappropriate to the way they thought educational "research" should be conducted.

My reply was that such reactions illustrated precisely what I feel is wrong with much of the educational "research" that is done--it refuses to talk or develop meaningful associations with practitioners in the field. Working from an "objectivity-seeking quantitative research on teaching" paradigm (Gage, 1989), a "researcher" should look only at "significant statistical results," and such a framework ignores the importance of understanding and describing lived experiences. I maintained that their quantitative ways of objectively interpreting the world were not a completely errant, but when the politics of a "research" methodology empowered "researchers" to control what gets called that name, then something is wrong. I concluded that they needed to acknowledge that alternative frameworks and perspectives had legitimacy.

And with respect to the notion that participants should be randomly selected, I noted that Kathy and I were not striving for objectivity but to build a relationship of "researching friends." I maintained that more "friendship" is needed between university

and school-based staff. I also pointed out that the fact that we had started to develop a working relationship through university classes was a very hopeful sign because it suggests that attending university can promote opportunities for cooperative educational studies.

A few audience members supported portions of my defense and pointed out that our paper was very honest in its openness of how "to seek the question"--to search. Since I have a particular affinity for hyphens, most everyone agreed that I could call what Kathy and I had done "re-search," in order to emphasize that we were "searching." Almost was I persuaded by their encouragement for such a compromise. Playing with the meanings of the hyphen, I could idiosyncratically emphasize that educators needed to "search" and "search again" with practitioners for answers. After the presentation, I began to doubt my reliance on a hyphen to make my point. I wondered why I was so persistent in holding on to the word *research*, with or without the hyphen. The literature of "action research" (Carr & Kemmis; Kemmis & McTaggart) provided me with an established defense for a use of the word. It was not as if I was the only field-based educator who was using the term. But why was the word *research* so important for myself and others to use in talking about what we were doing with teachers in schools? And was it really the appropriate word to describe precisely what Kathy and I had done?

As I reflected on these questions, I attended the next presentation of The University of Lethbridge Research Seminar Series (1989), which took place just three days after my seminar. Ian Robottom, of Deakin University, and Paul Hart, of the University of Saskatchewan, spoke about "Action Research and Professional Development in Environmental Education." When I listened to their descriptions of their studies, I recognized that they were also not completely comfortable with the term "action research." They rejected the recipe formulas outlined by Kemmis and McTaggart, and they frequently used a variety of terms to define what they were doing: "participatory research," "collaborative research," "qualitative research," or "research and professional development." They seemed to want a different vocabulary to signify their work, but each alternative depiction included references to *research*.

Their repetition of *research* allowed me to sense an ideology of meanings hiding within that particular word. For one thing, in order for education faculties to be recognized as legitimate participants of a university community, educators seemed to sense a need to characterize their activities as research. Within the education faculty itself, the clause "research says" seemed to connote a rationality of power for controlling thinking and action. So important was this term that, for some educators, any attempts to redefine or broaden its senses seemed to be viewed as academic declarations of war. I learned that debates about what constitutes an appropriate interpretations of research penetrates to the very core of what many university educators do and who think they are.

Once I recognized some of the politics associated with usages of this educational power word, I decided that I had no desire, not even a hyphenated one, to redefine *research*. I left quantitative and qualitative contestants to compete for who had the last word about *the word*. I, instead, began a process of erasing, wherever possible, my indiscriminate references and defenses for broad interpretations of its meanings. My aim became to describe what Kathy and I had done with greater precision. It seemed to me that we had essentially tried to do two things: first of all, to work together--to collaborate; and secondly, to search openly for questions and answers--to inquire. Hence, I came up with the combination *collaborative inquiry* as my alternative.

I shared my new descriptor with several members of the audience who had criticized my use of *research*, and they agreed that it seemed to represent with greater accuracy the experiences which Kathy and I had described in our "Talk To Learn" paper. They still held to their convictions that quantitative social science methodologies made up the authentic activities for academic research, and since I was no longer trying to appropriate a word which they had come to define in very specific ways, I seemed a small threat to their well established traditions. For my part, I could talk about my work without using their vocabulary (i. e. "pilot study") from their frame of reference. *Collaborative inquiry* is not a subjugated derivative to *research*. At the very least, I believed that I had opened a conversational door for differentiating what we each thought

was important.

And the most critical concession which these academic discussants made to me, from my perspective, was that *collaborative inquiry* was "not" *research*. The simple adverb *not*, when used in a computer search, excludes between the domains of two descriptors. On the one hand, it prohibits my work from being viewed with the same sense of status or authority as a more traditional and accepted methodology. Collaborative inquiry is not an accepted or well known approach to working with educators. On the other side of the coin, the *not* identifies what a positivistic social science may be failing to do for educational researchers: it does not deliberately seek to work with others in investigating questions developed by all participating parties. Instead, the academics own the questions; they own the methodologies; and they own the writing. Then, they wonder why *their research* is not being read by school-based professionals. The tyranny of quantitative research on teaching, with its supposedly objective methodologies and sanitized behavioristic language, prohibits interactive questioning for understanding.

It is precisely between the hegemonic cracks of research that I see a term such as *collaborative inquiry* being able to serve a very needed and useful purpose for educators: to contribute to the movement of educational "reconceptualization" (Pinar, 1975, 1988). My two-word revolution may be a small one, beginning with myself and any collaborative inquirers I can locate, but it is not without some hope for undoing the legacy of traditional research. After all, both Japan and Germany learned that the meanings of value, when linked to a name, are established by the quality of the products being distributed. The descriptor *collaborative inquiry* will be useful only if it can be associated with quality work which prompts educators to question openly and meaningfully together.

Personally, a small opening occurred immediately after my seminar presentation of "Talk To Learn" when a graduate student, who had been too reserved to make any comments during the question period, approached me to discuss his thoughts about the work which Kathy and I had done. He explained that one of most important parts of the paper for him as a prospective educational "researcher" was the moment when I admitted

to Kathy that I "did not know what they should do next" (Chapter 5, p. 134). This graduate student concluded that my failure to know the next methodological steps to take allowed collaborative questioning to begin, "Until you admitted that you did not know what to do next, you were simply giving directives. Once you became lost, however, then both of you became free to search together."

This graduate student's interpretation helped me see that the collaborative investigation of school issues, such as Kathy's and mine, can help myself and others to understand the importance of feeling lost at times and of thinking differently about education. But in order to change personal and collective thinking, I believe that language usage must be pushed toward edges of more precise meanings. That is why, if I could rewrite the paper which Kathy and I initially published, I would change the title to "Talk To Learn: An Expression Of Two Teachers' Collaborative Inquiry."

"An Expression" To Open Quest-ioning

I have added the words "*an expression of two teachers*'" to the new title in order to emphasize the ownership and uniqueness of the experiences which Kathy and I had. When I presented "Talk To Learn" at the seminar series, another criticism levelled against the paper was that we had generalized without having sufficient data. I recognize that one of the aims of quantitative research is to foretell, carefully developed statistical criteria have been formulated for drawing conclusions and making predictions. Analyses of collaborative inquiry, however, should avoid overgeneralizations, even though positivitic social science of research has taught many educators to expect them. A description of collaborative inquiry should be more of an open invitation for others to become involved in *quèst-ioning*, to quest and to question for named and unnamed experiences and realizations.

When "Talk To Learn" was criticized for overgeneralizing, I replied that I needed to review the paper and see whether we could phrase our findings in more particular terms. This revisit has prompted me to conclude that the body and conclusion of the paper do reasonably well in describing our particular collaborative search. But I do see a

need to revise the introduction. It tends to begin and end with summations of moral platitudes for everyone else to adopt. The reason why that part of the paper is so different relates to how the paper was actually composed.

After three months of field work, the introduction took nearly an entire month to write, and it changed very little throughout the next four months required to compose the rest of the paper. In the introduction, Kathy and I were trying to overview the essence of what we had learned from all of our experiences together. As a result, we spoke in generalities; for instance, the second sentence is, "Talking is the vital language link needed by youth and adults to discover their individual and collective voices for learning" (Chapter 5, p. 146-147). In order to change the tone of that statement, we need to alter the entire first paragraph:

> Contrary to the adage, talk is not cheap. Instead, we--Kathy Smith (a junior high language arts teacher) and Charles Hart (a University of Alberta doctoral student)--learned that talking is a vital, and often forgotten, language link which helped us understand and evaluate ourselves, our students, our language arts curriculum, and our relationships with colleagues. This paper is written with the hope that our experiences may prompt other educators to question whether talk can help them and their students learn.

The key changes which I have made are to identify the speakers in the first paragraph, not the third, and to use first person, plural pronouns consistently throughout the rest of the paper. Admittedly, pronouns such as *we* or *us* or *our* can be used to suggest the opinions of many (i. e. royalty formerly employed them to denote their personal abilities to speak for God as well as for the people), but I have delimited such a reading by emphatically referencing my first pronouns to the authors' names, which are embedded within dashes. Part of the purpose in doing so is to review the stages of evaluation which we specifically explored, but another reason is to invite readers to ponder how our experiences may be of value for them.

In rewriting the next two paragraphs, I would continue to use plural, first person pronouns as a subtle means of referencing the particularity of our experiences. For example, the rest of the introduction might read:

> In reflecting about how children and adults discover their individual and collective voices, we were reminded that infants and young children are expected

> and encouraged to think actively through talk. They try unfamiliar words in combining words into creative phrases and sentences. They talk to learn.
>
> In our view, school seems to change both the modes and the definitions of learning. Frequently, reading replaces talk. Interactions among students and between the teacher and the student often diminish as accurate interpretation of written texts becomes a top priority. In some classrooms, learning to write follows a pattern of not saying something original through writing but of accurately representing conventions and information which have been taught. "Learners" are viewed as "receivers, not senders" (Graves, 1984, p. 63).
>
> Unfortunately, we believe that the excitement and vigor evident in youthful talk is not recovered by many students and teachers. The recitation of accepted knowledge becomes more important than communicating thoughts and questions. This article is written because talk emerged as the fundamental process by which we, two language arts teachers, could learn to inquire collaboratively.

Although these may seem to be minor changes, they do signal a conscious effort to specify, not to generalize. They are, consequently, a representation for more exact and consistent points of view for thinking about the description of educational experiences. A change of thinking requires careful attention to the smallest details of language.

Valuing Voiced Voicelessness

In closing my opening revisit with "Talk To Learn," I should point out that Kathy and I were never really able to express what we thought was most important. We said what we could to lead forward our own lives, but we realized that we had not said what we really wanted to say. We had started our collaborative inquiry by pondering qualitative ways of evaluating teachers, a language arts curriculum, and students; we circled to grasp "collaborative negotiation," "conferences," and "celebration of accomplishments"; we unfolded implications of talking to learn; and as we closed our paper, we were attempting to understand *voice*. At first, we theorized that talk is a by-product of voice, but soon we began to question what some of the underlying meanings associated with an understanding of voice might be.

We did not regard *voice* as simply a grammatical structure: active and passive voice. Somehow the meanings seemed to go much deeper. Graves (1983) began to hint at more complex meanings when he defined *voice* as "that part of the self that pushes the writing ahead, the dynamo in the process" (p. 227). Graves associated voice with the inner drive to imprint the self into the written world. But we saw the implications of voice

extending far beyond writing. Instead, voice seemed to signify the life force which pushes each person ahead. Our collaborative inquiry was essentially a search for our own individual and collective voices: "to express one's voice--one's self--as a part of the world" (Graves, 1983, p. 128). One of the main problems with our quest was that our questions about the meanings of one door kept leading us to question another door. And fathoming the mysteries of one's own voice led us to question our responsibilities for others, an obligation not easy to express in words. In fact, the door of most worth is likely beyond abilities of language to open.

As I now make another bid to describe the indescribable, I am reminded of some of my reactions while I was a member of a committee revising Alberta's high school language arts curriculum (Alberta Education, 1982b). I opposed the predominantly authoritative drive to delineate definitive "exit outcomes" (Spady, 1988) for all learners. I maintained that the problems and potential of the incarnate child--the learning enigmas faced each day by teachers--were more important than legalistic phrasings of utopian outcomes. But while working on the government committee, I was observing the erasure of any statements (contained in the previous curriculum guide) which encouraged teachers to adjust teaching according to the needs and interests of students in particular classrooms.

After a draining day of writing learning outcomes, I emphatically expressed my arguments to a senior government leader who happened to drop in and ask us how things were going. In trying to explain my concerns I referred to a former student who was very like Melville's (1972) "Bartleby": he could talk and write but "would prefer not to" (p. 492). I was unable to implement an integrated language arts curriculum because this child refused to speak or write. He could competently complete multiple choice tests of his abilities to read, listen, and view, but he refused to fulfill any of his assigned essays. In fact, he had seldom written anything all through junior high, and very few of his peers or previous teachers had ever heard him speak. Armed with the learner expectations of the Curriculum Guide (Alberta Education, 1982), I eventually "failed" the child from going on

to the next language arts class. It was not until I recollected upon this child's still haunting silence to my repeated attempts to force him to write that I realized the dramatic irony of my final grade: the student was not the only one who had failed. Not only had I as a teacher *failed* to learn how to let this particular child learn, I was also *failing* to learn what this student could teach me.

Recognizing my failures with that student has since become a very powerful learning moment for me: teaching me to value the prodigious power of voiced voicelessness. What I learned by facing the staring, silent eyes of that young student is that my professional quest is not just to teach students to develop their speaking and written voices; I also need to learn to see others with an "eye that listens to the resonance of silence" (Levinas, p. 30). Teaching voice is not just helping others gain proficiency with the spoken or written word. Many famous and powerful leaders have used their political voices to gratify their own vain ambitions and to exercise compulsion over others. The challenge, then, is not simply to speak one's own will but to listen responsibly to the silent wills of others. As Levinas explains, "The birthplace of ontology is the said," but "the responsibility for another is precisely a saying prior to anything said" (Levinas, p. 43). The question of life is not just toward a definition of one's own being (ontology); instead, the living question that transcends description is how each individual can gain an authentic, individual voice which also responsibly attends to others, even those who are voiceless.

CHAPTER 6

Personally Unlearning And Learning Instructing and Leading

Forward

"We all still need an education in thinking, and first of all, before that, knowledge of what being educated and uneducated in thinking means." (Heidegger, 1977, p. 392)

When my doctoral candidacy committee requested that I write what Charles Hart thinks about instructional leadership, I was shocked into several months of not being able to write. I could not imagine what ideas might fill such a personal chapter or how it could be shaped. I had intended that my *quest-ioning* would conclude by moving from personal to public: from modelling self-criticism, to formulating my question, to defining public meanings of the word, to developing and implementing a methodology of collaborative inquiry, and to revisiting the published examples of collaborative writing. I had not thought about descending again into the lonely depths of personal stress and strife after my public odyssey. I now see that in journeying to collaborative lands it is impossible to get rid of oneself. To live on "multiple edges of any dividing slash" (Chapter 1, p. 2) is to be open to the repetitive interplay of the self with the other and the other with the self. Thus, I now proceed to step between the methodology of collaborative inquiry and co-authorship which I imposed upon myself--to write what I really think and how I really think about instructing and leading.

The first images which came to my mind in preparing to express my personal thoughts were those of *unlearning* and *learning*. It seemed to me that questioning meanings of learning is what is absent from many conceptions of instructional leadership. But learning is what inheres within evaluatory techniques for instructing and visionary activities for leading. Administrators need to learn to let teachers learn to teach for others; likewise, teachers need to learn to let pupils learn to learn for their responsibilities for the other. To pretend that principals can, by themselves, simply "provide" instructional leadership is to assume that executives with *de jure* power can have ready the "effective" means for solving the problems of educating teachers and children. This belies the reality

that learning is always problematic. To change how people act and think prodigiously challenges leaders and teachers to know each student, to understand how each learner thinks and how to educate each learner's thinking.

My questioning of learning led me to ponder the entirety of my own doctoral education and to ask myself a whirlwind of questions: what had I learned; what did I need to unlearn; how would I continue to learn and unlearn; and what difference would all this learning make in my own life when I returned to instruct students or to lead other teachers? Each question provoked me to take a close, reflective look at myself and my style of teaching. Since I seemed unable to write for several months, I waited and walked and read and tried to think of how I might answer each of these questions.

During this extended writer's block, I had a hunger to return to a paper which I had written after my first year of doctoral study. The Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta had initiated an inter-departmental review of their philosophy and approaches to undergraduate teacher education, and for one of the early committee meetings, I was invited to submit my views. I wrote an essay entitled "Teaching As A Mode Of Being." In it, I succinctly tried to state what I thought was most important for educating student teachers: understanding the value of questioning, the significance of naming, and the ethics for living. My re-reading of this early paper helped renew my faith that I would someday be able to write again, perhaps in a similar short essay format. I also found that I still believed everything which I had written; consequently, I made minor revisions to the text and re-titled it: "A Personal Declaration For Teaching Being." I regard this paper as a statement of the underlying thoughts which I hope to embody during the remainder of my career as a teacher-learner.

My writing logjam began to slowly loosen as titles for three more "mythopoetic" (Macdonald; Garman & Holland, 1989) essays began to trickle into my thoughts. Like Graves (1984), I frequently plan my papers through titles. The first title eventually became the paper "Spare The Red Pen And See The Child." This title came to mind as I began to sense that I was free to write on experiences and reflections not directly related

to my collaborative studies with Dale, Steve, and Kathy. In early December 1988, I discovered a young girl's journal in which the teacher had circled spelling errors in an entry describing how the girl's grandfather had just suffered a life-ending heart attack. My anger at another teacher's insensitivity was accompanied by a cathartic fear within myself. Prior to my doctoral studies, I had diligently filled any written work which my students had submitted to me with red-inked corrections. I resolved never to use a red pen again in grading my students' papers. I realized that one of the most important lessons I needed to learn as a professional instructor was to unlearn one of my previously most consistent teaching techniques.

In fact, my "Red Pen" paper was deliberately composed with the idea that it expressed how my thinking about technical characteristics of my instruction were changing. Habermas (1972, 1974, 1979) contends that the grounds of educated epistemology are framed by three interests: the "technical," the "practical," and the "emancipatory." "Technical" knowledge centres upon instrumental control over objects or people and with causal explanations. The "practical" is most concerned with interpretive understanding of self and others. The "emancipatory" aims at reflective communication and action upon social, cultural, and political conditions as well as the re-distribution of power. Although Habermas grants that each type of knowledge is of value, I believe that the built-in hierarchy of Habermas's epistemological stages creates an elitist preference for "emancipatory" knowledge. Carr and Kemmis, for example, place excessive emphasis on "emancipatory action research." In my view, however, one knowledge interest should not overshadow another but should balance the others. Each of these epistemological aims contributes toward the gaining of a "knowledge of what being educated and uneducated in thinking means" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 392).

My next two titles, therefore, were shaped by my hopes to express a balanced epistemology in educating Charlie. The title "Let Voice Be/ Questioned Why?/ (the-one-for-the-other)" was originally intended to organize the thoughts for my emancipatory paper, but when my writer's block returned with a title that was supposed to be practical,

I finally decided to write both practically and emancipatorily about my "Let Voice Be" title. In this paper, I sensed much greater freedom to reflect on a variety of educative experiences: deliberating on a colleague's question, a student bouncing a balloon in my classroom from my "Archipelago" paper (Chapter 4), some more thoughts about my work with Steve Ramsankar, and an incident when I as a university student had deconstructed someone else and had also been deconstructed. These experiences helped me flesh out meanings of two questions which I uncovered after two years of doctoral study. Each question informs how I, as a teacher, understand myself and my relationships with others.

My final title, "Walking Behind Gladly & * * *," came to me in early November 1989, exactly when I wanted to start work on my last personal paper. By the time I started writing, I had given up being able to write an "emancipatory" paper since I believed that a complete state of "emancipation" is unattainable. Instead of knowingly trying to make my final essay fit the elite stage of Habermas's epistemological framework, I happened to become involved in a conversation with several friends at a conference, and in the course of our discussion, I related an experience I had while I was trying to walk and talk my way out of my writer's block. After I returned from the conference, the writing of "Walking Behind Gladly & * * *" simply seemed to flow from my fingertips. It was not until I completed it that I realized my primary concerns in my "Walking Behind" paper were how a troubled student could communicate and act upon social conditions in which she found herself and how I could re-distribute my power as a teacher and an author with this young student. Even though it was not consciously intended, I ended up writing another partially "emancipatory" essay after all.

Each of the following four papers is, therefore, a written attempt to tell what I have learned and unlearned in my quest to understand and to be an instructor and a leader. They represent what my thinking is and reveal how I think about teaching and learning. And although they were supposed to appear to be essays, they are really opportunities for ongoing, "mytho-poetic" storytelling. I love stories. In fact, after I recently finished telling one of my stories to a class, one of my students commented, "You

live for moments when you can tell one of your stories and relate it to our class discussions, don't you?" I had to agree that I did, and I probably always will.

A Personal Declaration For Teaching Being

To be a teacher is to understand the primacy of continually and vexingly re-defining the question: "What does it mean to be a teacher?" Graduate education programs recognize this principle by their repeated emphasis that master's and doctoral students spend a great deal of time simply learning to ask educated questions. Why, in North America, do students have to wait until after 16 years of school attendance to uncover the secret that questioning is the lifeblood of learning--and teaching?

With questioning as the driving force behind *why* and *what* is taught and learned, "naming" (Freire) emerges as the faithful and temporal process of answering. The dialogue of naming ranges from learning to recognize and address students by their given and assumed names, to rehearsing societies' banking system of names for everything from metaphysical philosophy to scientific nomenclature, to the liberating involvement of individually and collectively re-naming both the animate and inanimate, conductive and super-conductive, mysteries of lived experiences. Obviously, the naming process proceeds through stages of learning; children must first be able to eat milk and bread before consuming meat and potatoes. A "concerns based" approach to teacher preparation" (Hall, 1985), for example, could serve as a viable way of framing the structure of course work for such answering as long as students and teachers constantly *re-MINDED* themselves to question their named solutions. Student teachers should be prepared for the real world of teaching, but they should also be challenged to change the world through their questioning. Thus, any named methodology--from Madeline Hunter's (1983, 1984) technological tools (i. e. "script taping) to Bloom's (1956) taxonomy to a Carr and Kemmis critical praxis--can model qualities of teaching, but any frame of education should also be continually deconstructed, or re-questioned.

The re-naming and changing of the world cannot be effected, however, through what Aoki calls "academies of alienation." Like Aoki, I believe that much of today's

education, from elementary to secondary and from undergraduate to graduate, reduces teachers and students to a dehumanized archipelago of answer copiers. Educators need to stop pretending that they know the answers when they really do not, and the public needs to learn how to abandon the deceptive, nostalgic belief that their foremothers and forefathers knew all the right answers during a long lost, mythical golden age which can be regained by going back to the basics. Instead of attempting to claw a way back into an protective womb that is impossible to re-enter or feigning a paradise of enlightened answers, the direction of human questioning and naming should be forwards--learning ways *to be* and *to become* ethical, thoughtful beings who are accountable for individual and cultural differences together. Student teachers should not simply be expected to imitate the fictions taught to them; instead, both teachers and students should be encouraged to *re-PETITION* (earnestly ask again) for faithful hints and guesses about how to live well differently yet lovingly belong together.

Spare the Red Pen and See the Child

> *Emily, with mounting urgency: "Oh, Mama, just look at me one minute as though you really saw me. Mama, fourteen years have gone by. I'm dead. You're a grandmother, Mama. I married George Gibbs, Mama. Wally's dead, too. Mama, his appendix burst on a camping trip to North Conway. We felt just terrible about it--don't you remember? But, just for a moment now! we're all together. Mama, just for a moment we're happy. Let's look at one another." (Wilder, pp. 61-62, [Our Town])*

Twice during presentations of my doctoral research, I have been asked to express in plain terms (abandoning educational jargon and citation) what I believe is most important about leadership in education. On each occasion, I gave the same answer: I paraphrased the dead Emily's pleas to her living mother--to take the time to "look at one another."

It seemed appropriate, therefore, to begin this second of four essays, devoted to an explication of what Charles Hart believes and thinks as an instructional leader, with a direct quote from Wilder's classic play Our Town. He dramatically says so much in so few lines, and his words still stimulate the palpitations of my heart just as when I read them for the first time in the Fall of 1978. Like Pinar's (1980) transformative intrigue with

Kafka's (1968) The Trial, my thoughts about literature and of life have undergone at least a partial metamorphosis through my literary encounters with Thornton Wilder's work of imagination. This is not to imply that I have learned to "realize life" while I live it, "every, every minute" (Wilder, p. 62). Instead, Emily's words remind me that instructing and leading others is continually attempting "to find a value above all price for the smallest events in our daily life" (Wilder, p. xi).

In my quest to be *re-MINDED* (to look reflectively at how I have instructed others in the past and how I intend instruct in the future), I have decided to take a pledge of unlearning:

> I hereby and henceforth promise never again to use red pens (or, for that matter, any permanent colored pens or even pencil colors that are difficult to erase) for the purposes of grading students' papers. In their place, I will use a pencil as a symbolic reminder of erasability, trust, and belongingness. (August 19, 1989)

This pledge does not mean that I will ban red pens, or their likeness, from personal use. As with Graves (1984), red is one of my favorite colors for writing. Red writing instruments also highlight text very effectively: if I circle an idea in red in my writing, I can quickly locate it again. But with respect to the processes of editing and grading, I must forswear writing tools which imply that my responses to students' writing are permanently correct, distrustfully suspicious, or objectively inhuman.

This resolution is also not one that I advocate for every teacher. For other teachers, this is only a warning against unthinking use of a stereotypical teaching tool and a plea for cherishing human relationships. The use or un-use of a tool in a particular context is not as important as the need to look more *care-fully* at the students one teaches.

Part of the rationale for my resolve is embedded in my "mythopoetic" (Macdonald; Garman & Holland) interpretations of my surroundings. As I reflected on my 14 years of teaching, I began to see connections between myself and the thesis for Clarke's (1980) "The Obsolescence of Man": "The old idea that man invented tools is therefore a misleading half-truth; it would be more accurate to say that *tools invented* man" (p. 320). I realized that I unconsciously relied upon red pens to invent my power over students. Week

after week, year after year, I handed back students' writing hammered shut in red. Somehow, when I picked up a red pen for grading essays, my personality automatically changed as a result of my "lived aesthetic experience" with "texture" (Jagodzinski, 1989b) to become a primeval murderer of student expression.

My actions were not unlike Moonwatcher, the man-ape in Kubrick's (1968) classic film 2001: A Space Odyssey. Moonwatcher learned to use a bone as a tool for killing herbivorous hogs and moving up a rung in the food chain. The exhilaration of power which this tool-invented ape-man experiences after he discovers how to grasp and smash is accompanied by the famous soundtrack of the drummed ecstacies from Richard Strauss's (1973) "Also Sprach Zarathustra." After murdering competing tribes of apes in order to keep from sharing a life-sustaining water hole, Moonwatcher's new dominance over others on the earth and his hopes to master dimensions beyond earth's gravitational fields are cinematically portrayed by his throwing his technical killing tool into the air and watching the parabola of the bone's ascent and descent. Moonwatcher has learned the rapture that "to know is to kill."

The film goes on to portray that modern women and men still experience the exhilaration of their "will to power" (Nietzsche, 1987). Shots of the bone's flight are juxtaposed with views of a space shuttle--a technological tool that no longer falls back to earth--docking with a space station to the rhythms of a Johann Strauss waltz. The musical beats are melodic and controlled, but the desire to manipulate knowledge still lurks within Dr. Heywood Floyd's pen, which weightlessly floats from his dozing hand. Like the floating rhythms of the waltz, the un-grasped pen seems more civilized than Moonwatcher's bone, but once Floyd awakes, the audience eventually learns that Floyd has used his pen to map out a program of censorship with respect to the recent discovery of a mysterious monolith on the moon (a second watering hole of knowledge). The rest of the movie details the race toward a the red spot on Jupiter (a third watering hole), an odyssey which astronaut David Bowman only completes by murdering the computer HAL 9000, the ultimate tool-invented automaton. It is only by banning all tools and

technological devices from his mind, that David is subsequently enabled to die from the objects of his temporal world and transform himself into an embryo--a Zarathustra being which, according to 2010 (Clarke, 1982), teaches watching care for all living things. Or as Daignault (1988) suggests, "to discover ways" in which "to know is not to kill" (p. 9).

I have not become a Zarathustrian embryo in my personal odyssey toward instructional leadership. I have not mastered how to share the computer as a watering hole for my students. I have only learned to unlearn my grasping of the pen in respect to exercising my teaching power over the grading of students' writing. It may appear to be only a small step to an outsider, but for myself and those students whom I will interact with throughout the rest of my life--I hope it is one giant leap of personal technique toward human being.

The turning point which prompted my resolve to abandon the use of my favorite editing tool occurred when I visited a middle school and chanced upon a Grade 6 student's journal (I will call the author "Teara"), which had been discarded as garbage. The first two pages in the binder were the teacher's photocopies given to all the students in order to provide a model of what to write in journals ("In journals we write personal information, not our deepest secrets"), how to structure such writing (follow "the writing plan" of the example), and to admonish students to edit their journal entries ("A sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a punctuation mark"). Initially, the "transactional" (Britton) tone of the teacher's instructions escaped my notice until I began reading the student's September 6 entry, a page and a half "what I did last summer" travel-logue of family activities, and I saw that the teacher had corrected spelling errors and had noted that the entry was incomplete and not about what was presently happening in the student's life. I began to sense that there was a right way to write journals in Teara's particular classroom.

The presiding presence of correctness became crystal clear, though, when I read the third entry:

> Today I found out that my grandpa had a harditac last night late My moms down helping my grandpa it is vering very shocking and sad. (October 6, 1988)

Teara had attempted to revise her writing by crossing out *vering*, but the teacher added a correct spelling of *heart attack*, a period after *late*, an apostrophe over the *s* in *moms*, along with a comment: "Yes I know how you feel. This is a hard time for you." My initial reaction to the teacher's red-penned responses--which glared over Teara's blue-inked mourning for the illness and subsequent death of her grandfather--was one of anger. It seemed to me that when a child was in a state of shock, a misspelling and minor punctuation corrections were totally unnecessary reactions to that child's journal writing. The teacher's expression of empathy seemed insincere when juxtaposed with her compulsion to edit.

My second response, however, was a fearful admission that I needed to expiate a similar pettiness for which I had condemned another. In fact, as I reminded myself of my own teaching failures, I vividly recalled an incident in which I had been teaching a student whose father had suffered a severe heart attack. I found out about the illness through an informal conversation with the boy's mother nearly a month after the father had been hospitalized. When she discovered that I was completely unaware of what another mother has called "the utter irrelevance of school" (Doll, 1988) for her child's heart-arrested world, she sternly yet sincerely asked:

> Didn't you see the change that came over him? Didn't you see the glazed look in his eyes? Didn't you see that he couldn't function in class? Didn't you see that he could barely force himself to walk down the hallways of the school? What are you teaching? (October, 1983)

Like the biblical Job, I had no response to this mother's whirlwind of haunting questions except to acknowledge that "I abhor myself" and needed to "repent in dust and ashes" (The Holy Bible, King James Translation, Job 42: 6). My confession was ephemeral, though. As I fled the mother's presence, my thoughts returned to the stacks of students' comparison-contrast essays (which tended to regurgitate my interpretations of literature) that I needed to edit and grade. Like Katherine Mansfield's (1980) boss in the story "The Fly" who kept himself so busy that he could completely blot out painful reflections about the tragic death of his son, I kept teaching language arts more as a dehumanized *what*, not *care-*

fully looking at *whom* I was teaching.

I was trapped within my own ink-splotched technique of looking at teaching. The officer of Kafka's (1981) "In The Penal Colony" frequently came to my mind as an exemplar of an individual who when confronted with administrative changes to prison justice sacrificed himself upon the machine of torture which he had operated for many years. At times I felt as if I should impale myself upon stacks of red pens glued on the door to my classroom. Then, my whining students, their over-protective parents, means'-minding administrators, and bleeding-heart whole language professors would understand that not only did I live by the red pen, but I was prepared to die by the red pen. Escape from a particular way of doing things seemed nearly unthinkable after having honoured a tradition for so long.

It was not until I reflectively gagged upon the insensitive responses to Teara's journal that I vomited red pens from my teaching. But like many former smokers who supply their mouths with substitutes of gum or candy, my fingers hungered for a tactile surrogate which would allow them to explore a more humane way of responding to student writing. Almost immediately, traits of pencils began to appeal to me: (1) pencilled writing does not overshadow a student's penned or typed writing; a hard lead can be difficult to see; (2) pencils are not commonly used for finished work; they are routine for rough drafts; (3) the lead does not leave a permanent mark; standard equipment on many pencils is the eraser. The characteristics of faintness, roughness, and impermanence reminded me of Bazen's (1986) conclusions about language usage: "that notions of 'correctness' needed serious reconsideration" (p. 113). On a personal level, I needed to acknowledge my own fallibility and reconsider my interactions with students. In working toward such ends, the pencil was becoming not so much another tool to edit and grade writing but a powerful symbol for repeatedly informing broader understandings of practice.

When I began sharing my ideas about pencils with colleagues, many had experienced similar discomforts with grading techniques. Some had already stopped using

red pens and were trying alternatives:

1. One teacher made anecdotal comments and corrections on a transparency overlaid on a student's writing while he discussed the paper with the student. After the discussion, the teacher kept the transparency. If the student wanted a copy of the teacher's comments, the teacher repeated his analysis on a new transparency and the student also took notes. (Golub, 1989; Golub & Reid, 1989)

2. Another teacher attached "stick on notes" to students papers which her students could easily remove if they wanted.

Both teachers were experimenting with ways of mediating the power of their responses to students' writing; they wanted teacher remarks to seem less permanent and more erasable. As I saw commonalities between their approaches and mine, searching for meanings of erasability became one of the aims of my experiments with pencils.

An unfolding of erasability began to be brought forth when a teacher who had tried a variety of different colored pens as well as pencils counselled that although pencils had worked well for him, grades should always be written in pen. Several of his students had changed their marks before showing their essays to parents. This reasoned argument nearly persuaded me to balance my erasable editing and comments with a permanently inked grade. Another colleague, however, questioned such a division of techniques: "Why should the grade have to be in pen?" This second teacher saw trust as being one of the primary meanings symbolized through erasability; consequently, a blanket attempt to eliminate pencils to record grades was also a representation of a teacher's lack of trust in students. The eraser which made the pencil dangerous for one teacher provided another teacher with a saving power. The challenge was to recognize both possibilities lay within interpretations of an object's essence and to prepare for ways to understand and tap the saving power whenever possible.

With the help of the second teacher, I decided to record even grades in pencil on student's papers as a gesture of faith in students' trustworthiness. If some students demonstrate dishonesty, then I will talk with those students, their parents, or other concerned individuals and negotiate alternative approaches for interacting. For me, though, the eraser of a pencil can serve as a reminder that one of the ways in which "to

know is not to kill" is to learn to manifest and nurture trust between myself and the students whom I teach.

I might eventually be able to erase my literal reliance upon grasping the mnemonic of a pencil with an eraser, but my coming to see the eraser as a symbol of trust has started me upon a more enduring way of looking at the world. Namely, questioning meanings of tools and techniques also involves a *quest* to understand meanings of being. My addition of an atypical hyphen to *quest-ioning* is an attempt to represent the dual roles of my asking. Humans are inextricably chained to the technology which they employ, yet hiding within the technology are revelations of human presence and potential. Heidegger (1977) proposes that "the innermost indestructible belongingness of man" will come to light providing that women and men pay "heed to the essence of technology" (p. 314). Through my poetic attempts to understand the essential nature a teacher's red pen and a common lead pencil, I have uncovered the new yet indestructible truth that technology is not just something which belongs to humans, but even more that humans belong to the essence of technology, and ultimately humans responsibly belong to the essence of each other's being. Hopefully, such a revealing will serve as an instructional lead for myself and others to sense the essences hiding within surrounding things and, most importantly, to take the time "to look at one another"--the possibilities of future being depend upon human abilities to see saving glimpses of the totality of belongingness.

Let Voice Be

Questioned Why?

("the-one-for-the-other")

Teaching Colleague: *"So what have you learned after two years of doctoral study at university?"*

Doctoral Candidate: *"I have learned two questions: 'What will we question today?' and 'Why? (the-one-for-the-other)'."*

Two questions don't seem like much baggage to bring back after three years of graduate study. They don't require much brain or computer memory space, and the media resources required to present them to students or associates easily reside within a piece of chalk. Nor did my two questions immediately impress the colleague who asked me to

demonstrate my university learning. I doubt if I will be invited to present a professional development workshop at his school. Yet hiding within seven words is my theory for teaching-learning practice.

The first question--"What will we question today?"--is the presiding invitation for beginning and repeatedly informing my instruction. I initially stumbled upon the power of such an open question during an improvisational lesson in which Grade 12 students and I bounced a balloon around my language arts classroom after the principal had unexpectedly dropped in to evaluate my teaching. In an attempt to set an educational tone to a frivolous activity, I jestingly asked, "What shall we talk about while we are bouncing this balloon?"; and the unforgettable and immediate reply of one of the students was: "Why don't we talk about pneumatic societies?" (Chapter 4, p. 69). My class and I had recently read Aldous Huxley's (1980) Brave New World, a story about a futuristic society where everyone can safely "become comfortably numb" (Waters, 1979). In order to insinuate the mindless hollowness of a lifestyle which incessantly over-indulges in the use of sex and drugs, Huxley repeatedly describes the upper alphabetized classes in his novel as being "pneumatic." Until I heard the student's response, though, I had not seriously considered that my students might actually make connections between their present social world and a vacuous utopia. Nor had I related my teaching reality at the moment of the student's asking--serving as a dehumanized object of evaluation for a science of educational supervision (Glatthorn)--to Huxley's stimulus-response controlled populace. After the student's question, I attempted to promote conversation about "pneumatic societies," but I was nearly struck dumb by the student's insightful question of my question.

I suspected that I had taught one of the most important lessons of that year, perhaps of my career, but I was not quite sure how it had happened. I wanted to give myself credit, and for several years theorized that techniques, such as balloon bouncing, were activities which more teachers needed to imitate. Reliance upon technical approaches alone, however, did not allow teachers or students greater possibilities to learn. Instead,

they tended to reduce teaching and learning to activity completion. Somehow, an authentic sense of practice should open doors for individual reflection and communal deliberation--for interactive thinking.

The emancipatory potential of a thought-provoking question eluded my notice until one of the members of my doctoral committee helped me hear its taken-for-granted resonance. While my car was double parked, I stopped at Dr. Margaret Haughey's office to return a library book. On my way out her door, I expressed my frustration at not being able to write a personal definition of "emancipatory practice." The tenor of her reply was:

> Your question of what to talk about during your "bouncing a balloon" lesson is an example of emancipatory practice. You offered students a path to explore possibilities of meanings with you; they did not just review facts. (June 15, 1989)

By the time I returned to my still un-ticketed car, it seemed as if a myriad of reflective doors had opened for me in my attempts to define emancipatory instructional leadership. For example, I had not realized the educative power hiding in John Kennedy's (1964) chiasmatic question, "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country" (p. 12). Such rhetoric invites each listener to ask reflective questions as a prelude to communal action. Learning to ask significant questions emerged as a linguistic key for opening different ways of understanding my teaching.

Initially, I was tempted to simply repeat the phrasing which had worked during my "balloon" lesson. As I "reflected through recollection" (Garman, 1986c) upon the "personal practical knowledge" (Clandinin) unconsciously present in my colloquial question and the more consciously explicit presuppositions which I want to motivate my ongoing teaching practice, I decided that I needed to phrase the latter question as precisely as I presently can. Interpretive understanding can be brought forth through reflectively gleaned tidbits of language:

> The intrinsically linguistic condition of all our understanding implies that vague representations of meaning that bear us along get brought word by word to articulation and so become communicable. (Gadamer, 1986, p. 110)

Thus, the five words--"What will we question today?"--represent my public endeavor to articulate the growth of my personal understanding of my own pedagogy.

Before revealing the meanings which each word in my question presently signify to me, I must point out that I attempt to relate my personal interpretations to "the commonplaces of curriculum": *teachers*, *students*, *subject-matter*, and *milieux* (Schwab, 1983). In my experience, each of these commonplaces has vitally affected my classroom practice, often without my consciously knowing their influence. I want some means of reminding myself of the complexity of the teaching-learning situations, and Schwab's commonplaces provide me with a theoretical frame for balancing the daily realities of teaching.

Subject-matter, for example, is represented by *what*. Ideally, this *what* could be any topic which comes up for conversation, but in many secondary classrooms curricular assumptions pre-determine "what is taught" (Schwab, 1983, p. 241). As an English teacher, for instance, language and literature tend to dominate teaching topics, and my interest in language explains why *will* is the second word of my question, not *shall*. While the distinction between *will* and *shall* is no longer observed by many educated users (Warriner, Mersand, Townsend, & Griffith, 1973), its usage can be legitimately defended according to the criterion of using language with more precision and efficiency (Norton, 1973). Perrin explains:

> Some writers use *shall* in the first person and *will* in the second and third persons in making the future tense. In the emphatic future, expressing determination of the speaker, Formal English theoretically reverses this use of *shall* and *will*. (p. 380)

From an efficiency standard, my choice of *will* subtly stresses the emphatic future of class discussion and also draws attention to changing language norms. Such possibilities in language usage suggest that subject-matter (*what*) should be open for ongoing re-definition in the near future (*will*) of classroom interaction.

When viewed as a pun, *will* can connote "fixed desire," "intention," and "determination" (Oxford, 1989, p. 864), and these punned meanings conveniently preface *we*, which represents both students and teachers. Neither the teacher nor students alone should determine *what* happens in a particular classroom. Nor should the *what* of teaching be "decided in Moscow and telegraphed to the provinces" (Schwab, p. 240). Instead,

mediation of differing *wills* is the teaching-learning reality of classroom life. Entwistle maintains that a vital "part of teacher education in both its theoretical and practical aspects is learning the art of compromise" (p. 31). My use of *we* is an attempt to acknowledge the ongoing importance of compromise, but not in a pejorative sense. Those *we*, who by choice or circumstance happen to end up at a learning site together, should seek to *appreciatively compromise*--to grasp both the price and worth of relationships with each other and with *what* can be taught and learned in particular contexts.

To challenge and allow an ethos of appreciative compromise to be brought forth, I invite both students and teachers to question surrounding circumstances, the *milieux*. What hides behind the task of repeating answers, a common occurrence in classrooms, is the idea that every utterance "exists in a setting" and "carries a history" (Corder, 1986). Reversing the emphasis away from giving answers to questioning for questions provides a different way of experiencing the world. Gadamer (1986) explains:

> One of the more fertile insights of modern hermeneutics is that every statement has to be seen as a response to a question and that the only way to understand a statement is to get hold of the question to which the statement is an answer.... Only when I have first understood the motivating meaning of the question can I even begin to look for an answer. (p. 106-107)

Obviously, such questioning never ends, at least as long as mortals do not hopelessly "bang" or "whimper" themselves to an untimely "This is the way the world ends" (Eliot, p. 840). Complete understanding of self, others, or things is never possible because human interpretation is always in the "middle, medium place," which are the etymological root meanings of *milieu* (Oxford, 1989, p. 765). Consequently, teaching-learning becomes a questioning quest, an adventurous journey, which is continually renewed in the planned and impromptu wondering about the meanings of living in the midst of an ever-changing world.

The concluding adverb of my first question, *today*,
re-emphasizes the predominance of time over place; it sharpens the "emphatic future" implied in my use of *will* toward the explicit point of "the present." *Today*, then, symbolizes my hopes of teaching-learning in the "now," but not by dissecting teaching

into clocked milliseconds. Instead, I long to converse meaningfully between the pendular bounces of a balloon, to arrest thoughtful moments within the twinkling of eyes, and to act with readiness for others. The mechanics of chronography are not as important as uncovering embodied meanings of time. This is what Ricoeur (1984) has called "human time": "to live between the private time of our mortality and the public time of language" (p. 20). Thornton Wilder's Our Town, which deliberately strips away stage trappings as a means of raising "an individual action into the realm of idea" (p. x), is a theatrical narration which prompts its audience to glimpse human time: to connect a past to present life and to speak to a still unborn future. But as Garman (1989) maintains, the "drama of the classroom" is able "to contrive situations and invite people to become involved in ways that no other institution can, not even the theater" (p. 5). It is toward incarnations of *human teaching-learning time* that my benedictory *today* hints.

Since much of the flux of *human time* is measured by the power of language to transfer ownership of--to emancipate--experiences, objects, ideas, and actions into shared words, the challenge of a teacher of language is to demonstrate how understandings of the world can be stretched through naming. At times, language may seem to hide temporal change. For instance, simply reflecting on the names of established rivers tends to give the impression that flowing water remains the same. It is easier to understand and agree with Heraclitus--that "one cannot walk through the same river twice" (Kierkegaard, 1983, p. 123)--when one thinks about or performs the act of actually walking through a river.

This means that naming, like questioning, must be viewed as an ongoing human process. Freire asserts:

> To exist, humanly, is to *name* the world, to change it. Once named, the world in its turn reappears to the namers as a problem and requires of them a new *naming*. Men are not built in silence, but in word, in work, in action-reflection. (p. 76)

I first consciously experienced one of my students practicing such creative naming when the term "pneumatic societies" was invented. This particular student used a literary prompt, Huxley's Brave New World, to interpret his perception of life in the 1980's. He

taught me that schemed lesson scenarios become meaningful only as they connect with the fluid, breathing vitality of mortality. My recovery and refinement of the question which allowed such an emancipatory response has led me to a different way of approaching teaching-learning. The overall aim of my first question has evolved, at this time, toward balancing commonplace structures of education with an open invitation for both individuals and groups to imprint their voices in a dialogue with the surrounding world.

I might have been content at having uncovered one question, but something seemed to whisper that inviting emancipatory naming required a corollary question: I could not simply let a voice be. Historically, Hitler came to my mind as a pedestrian leader who discovered how to use his powerful voice to pretend to emancipate a nation's problems but who implemented the holocaust of World War II and "the final solution"--shedding rivers of human blood. Personally, I remembered that the nadir of my reflective "archipelago" letter (Chapter 4) involved my apologizing to a class for how I had used my voice to intimidate a student. Prior to the apology, my studies at university had convinced me that I could use my abilities to speak and write to change the world. Soon, however, the liberating experience of discovering the power of my personal voice was accompanied with increasing frustration when things did not go as I willed them. My singing the joys of emancipation changed to yelling at interruptions. I habitually began to turn the energy of my mouth against anyone who opposed my will. At first I yelled at adults, but soon, like Joyce's (1986) immature man-child Little Chandler who was only virile enough to scream at his crying infant, I was modelling yelling as a way to teach youth. I was using my newly discovered university voice to inhibit children from finding their personal/public voices.

Nor can I pretend that all my problems are behind me. Even as I write, I face daily challenges to exercise my vocal cords toward ends of unrightful dominion. Often my own family members are victims, and I must repeatedly ask their forgiveness for instances when I use my tongue to belittle or compel. My personal odyssey toward a more sensitive teaching-learning practice is challenged by the ways I exercise my power or influence

with respect to others. Nor do I believe that am I alone in this struggle. Most humans, including myself, seem predisposed to abuse and misuse their authority over others. Hence, the emancipatory hopes of my first question are inescapably intertwined with my concerns for "communal solidarity" (Gadamer, 1986), which my second question--"Why? (the-one-for-the-other)"--tries to utter.

As with my first question, both words of the second question, coupled with the *unquestion* that is beyond question, have symbolic implications. One meaning of *why* evokes the question of *purpose*. Victor Frankel frequently cited a Nietzschean statement--"He who has a *why* to live can bear with almost any *how*" (p. 76)--as one of the touchstones to his survival in a death camp. The determination of an existential purpose allows for understandings and methodologies to unfold when enduring suffering. I will illustrate the pervasive power of purpose by referring to my work with Dr. Steve Ramsankar. His personal philosophy of education is:

> I believe that every person was created by God and that each person has a God-given purpose for living. Part of my purpose as an educator is to help others discover their divine yet individual purposes for living. (Chapter 5, p. 123)

Ramsankar's *why* for educating is site and time specific; he has been the principal of The Alex Taylor Community School for the past 20 years. His belief in a divine purpose for each child and adult who enters the school has led him to his *how's*: community concepts of schooling as well as his daily embraces which demonstrate that "saying 'hello' is a teaching activity" (Chapter 5, p. 114). Impacted within a personal, purposeful *why* are answers to the questions of *where*, *when*, *who*, and *how*.

Lest my example be interpreted as affirming the rightness of religious beliefs, I will relate two more anecdotes of individual purpose. One of the volunteers at Alex Taylor School once talked to me about *why* he spent many hours helping the school. In the course of our conversation, he talked about Ramsankar's belief in a "God-given" purpose for each person; an idea which this individual could not accept because he was an atheist. Nevertheless, this volunteer ended our conversation by stating, "Somehow, though, I believe it is my purpose to help the school." When I heard this, I remembered how Sartre

(1965) concluded his essay on "The Humanism of Existentialism":

> Existentialism isn't so atheistic that it wears itself out showing that God doesn't exist. Rather, it declares that even if God did exist, that would change nothing. There you have our point of view. Not that we believe that God exists, but we think that the problem of His existence is not the issue. (p. 62)

What is at issue, then, is how human beings treat each other, or, as Ramsankar states when he explains what he means when he uses the word *spiritual*, "I refer to man's caring spirit and love for each other" (Chapter 5, p. 113). To learn such caring is a lesson which never ends. I relearned it recently when I publicly promised to write a deconstructive analysis of a professor's essay. From asking one question, "Why was the paper written," I judged that this individual had written a particular piece to perpetuate personal fame. When I asked myself "Why I wanted to write a reply to such a paper," however, my only impetus emerged as anger against the author. Once I realized the pettiness of my own motivations, I abandoned my attempts to satirize and wrote a paper on an entirely different subject. When I presented the second paper, I simply acknowledged that I had failed to keep my original commitment. I still view that experience as a successful failure. Motivations for thinking, writing, and acting must be rigorously questioned about what lies beyond wars of personal interests: "[When] Beings become patient, and renounce the allergic intolerance of their persistence in being; do they not then dramatize the *otherwise than being*" (Levinas, p. 4).

It is in quest of that which Levinas believes is "beyond essence" that the parenthetical ("the-one-for-the-other") serves as a rhetorical affectation of that which is beyond being questioned. It is impossible to signify that which insignifiable. Yet that is the purpose of the appositive after my second question. It "endeavors," in vain, to bring to "reflective awareness the communality that binds everyone together" (Gadamer, 1986, p. 135). But such awareness is beyond scientific or metaphysical rationality. The meanings of such communality can only be guessed at: it is subjectively animated by actions, "giving to the other the bread from one's own mouth" (Levinas, p. 79); it is glimpsed in the proximity of a face, "the face of a neighbor signifies for me an unexceptionable responsibility" (p. 88); it is linguistically prepositioned by "my responsibility for the other

is the *for* of the relationship" (p. 100); it is realized in suffering, "in the trauma of persecution it is to pass from the outrage undergone to the responsibility for the persecutor" (p. 111); it is dramatized in the Abrahamic reply, "'*here I am*,' answering for everyone and everything" (p. 114). Such questioning restores a sense of mystery to that which can never be concealed or unconcealed--only faced with forgiving and embraced with giving for ripeness.

Walking Behind Gladly & • • •

by

C. Seeseasi And Marie Seeville

"A thought of genius is not of one, but the thought of reconstruction is of one." (Seeville, 1989)

"Follow me the wise man said, but he walked behind." (Cohen)

"And gladly wolde he lerne and gladly teche." (Chaucer, 1959)

"A star's mighty good company...And...." (Wilder, p. 63)

This essay was borne upon touring soles of thought. At first, it was not a conversant journey but a cloistered fear and trembling that I had nothing to say about my study of educational concerns. After three years of investigating the educational literature and working with three leading educators in their respective schools, I did not really know what instructional leadership meant. For me, the term remains a literary and incarnate mystery.

For a while, I tried to deal with my writer's block by playing Solitaire, a card game which I had given up for over ten years. When no ideas emerged from hours of shuffling my self-pity, I took up walking. Instead of riding the bus to university, I spent five hours each day as a brooding pedestrian commuter. I could neither tongue nor pen my thoughts; but I did have the ability to put one foot in front of the other. The daily pilgrimages allowed my shod feet to feel a tingling of the "lived aesthetic of directionality"--a "walk toward an edge" (Jagodzinski, 1989b, p. 120).

Actually nearing the "sight/site/cite" (Jagodzinski, 1989a) of a inquisitive "edge," however, took me by complete surprise. I begrudgingly agreed to interrupt my solitary

walks for one week in order to help chaperon a community girls' summer camp. One of the planned activities was an hour and half hike to a lake. I was asked to walk behind the group and take care of any stragglers. As things turned out, only one twelve-year-old girl, whom I will call Marie Seeville, could not keep up with the leader and the other girls; Marie had sprained her ankle during an earlier camp activity. The group's leader, however, had already spoken to me about her more serious worries for this particular child: her father had abandoned the family nine months earlier, and Marie had plunged into a depression. For three months, she had refused to speak to any of the teachers or any other children at school. Her teachers and counsellors diagnosed her as demonstrating suicidal behaviors, but scheduling problems had prevented her from visiting a child psychiatrist until the week prior to camp. She had ended up failing all of her elementary subjects, except art and bell choir.

For the first half hour of our hike, Marie and I walked in almost complete silence, only exchanging courteous responses about each other's welfare. I knowingly led the way as she limped behind. Then, without any warning, Marie interrupted the distant cacophony of the other girls' laughter and screams, which we could still barely hear resonating ahead of us, and said,

> Mr. C., what do you think of this thought: "A thought of genius is not of one, but the thought of reconstruction is of one"? (July, 1989)

I replied that I thought I was probably one of the few people in the world who could appreciate the beautiful ambiguity of her statement. I had recently been re-reading Emanuel Levinas's Otherwise Than Being Or Beyond Essence and was used to cryptic sentences. I took out my pen and the note cards which I always carry in my shirt pocket and copied down her epiphanic thought exactly as she had first said it. For the next hour, we "walked and talked," exploring answers to her next question: "What do you think that thought means?"

I encouraged Marie to explain her ideas while I noted the key words of her explanations on my note cards. Once we arrived at the lake, I borrowed the leader's clipboard, transformed my shorthand into paragraphs, and later that morning asked Marie

to revise my framing of her statements. Her edited version reads as follows:

> The teachers slice you down just like a slice of bologna.
>
> I have proof. Well, excuse me, but I do have proof. They take charge of you like a little puppy or a little animal from the forest, like a fawn for example. That's the reality. They chop you down and bring you to no where--like you were a nobody, a nothing. Kids were breaking down and missing school because of this.
>
> They also favor certain people and treat them better than others. But they should treat everyone with the same level of respect, not just those who can put things down on a piece of paper that is good work.
> Sheena, for example, was having a hard time the last part of the year. The teachers would give her the answers. They were trying to move her up to their power. But she has her own power to move up if she wants to. You are the one who is supposed to bring it up, and Sheena needs to discover her own power, not theirs. Each one of us needs to discover our own power and talents.
>
> But the teachers don't teach us anything. They spend all of their time with upper achievers. Each person needs their own help. It doesn't matter who you are on the outside--on the pieces of paper that you turn in--it is what is inside that counts. If teachers are moral, they let you slide up.
>
> Everyone is in need of love and attention. You need to feel good about yourself. You need to keep holding on to the rod that allows you to build your confidence. (July, 1989)

Marie's comments reveal that she did not think of herself as one of the bright students in her class who could put "good work down on a piece of paper"; she was not a "genius." But by finding ways of interpreting her personal, physical, and academic problems, she was discovering her "own power" to rebuild faith in her abilities, talents, and potential. "The thought of reconstruction" allowed her to find a sense of wholeness--"oneness"--with herself and to move, at least during that day's trek, more confidently forward at her own pace.

From my perspective, Marie's thought raised a critical question about instructing and leading: could leading be paradoxically "walking behind" as Leonard Cohen asserted in his poem "Teachers"? Although I had not consciously altered my stride, that is what occurred immediately after Marie announced her thought--I slowed the tempo of my steps and began walking beside or behind her. A 12 year-old girl led me, Mr. Seeseasi, to cite a Heideggerian (1968) thought about teaching and learning:

> Teaching is more difficult than learning because what teaching calls for is this: to let learn.... The teacher is ahead of his apprentices in this alone, that he has still far more to learn than they--he has to learn to let them learn. (p. 15)

Such teaching is being far less sure of the ground ahead than the student because the teacher realizes that all sites which appear to be *terra firma* are really undulating seas. Pulsating continents actually move through quotidian mutations and, eventually, to the deaths and rebirths of temporal forms. Usually these changes occur so slowly that every generation needs daily instruction to see afresh that to teach is to learn "openness to the mystery" (Heidegger, 1966, 54-55).

But mystery is hard to accept in a twentieth-century world which thinks it can foretell the longevity of the sun. Scientists are expected to statistically predict the courses for each "Unknown Citizen's" (Auden, 1989) life. For instance, in preparing curricula for the 1990's, Alberta Education officials are striving to phrase definitive "exit outcomes" (Spady, 1988) which legally predestinate the journeys of children's testable learning. A primary fault of the present focus toward utopian ends is the erasure of any curricular statements which encourage a pondering of means. If teachers believe that they no longer have any moral or legal obligations to wonder how to learn to let students learn, then instructing and leading are more likely to degenerate into following a programmed, technical map which represses any lagging or straying from worn paths. I worry that new teachers, who train from such curricula may never come to the humbling realization that a curriculum guide cannot be sufficient for all travellers--at best, it can only serve as a prudent beginning.

As a result, a silently confused Marie is justifiably "failed" from an instructional system because she has not met the required learner expectations. Yet the educational system has also "failed" because it does not let an ingenious "thought of reconstruction" emerge as a bridge to new directions of learning: to reconstruct learning from failures. Such thinking makes instruction and its leadership constantly problematic. Not a restful thought for the billions life's travellers who, according to Thoreau (1950, [Walden]), choose to sleepwalk their way through life:

> The millions are awake enough for physical labor; only one in a million is awake enough for effective intellectual exertion, only one in a hundred millions to poetic or divine life. To be awake is to be alive. I have never yet met a man who

was quite awake. How could I have looked him in the face? (p. 81)

In an age with myriads of technological comforts it is simply too easy to turn up the heat of electric blankets. The electricity of artificial lighting has cast "faith and loving" into the shadows. The world lacks the messianic spit to remove the labored scales of its materialistic, doctored somnolence. A pagan fear and trembling reappears, however, when science can only predict but not prevent, react but not foretell, diagnose but not heal, autopsy but not resurrect. In moments of failure--and according to Nietzsche (1982) "all eternal joy longs for failures" (p. 436)--the mysterious makes itself known again. Puzzling riddles are actually present in each twinkling of an eye or every vibration of an eardrum but concealed to eyes that do not search to see or ears that do not question to hear the prodigious prodigy of prodigies.

So what is the somnambulant pilgrim, C. Seeseasi, to do in a dozing world?

Since my worsening myopia makes day dark, my night vision enables me to try only two or three tentative steps at a time. I am journeying feelingly along life's razored edges, throwing out prayerful sounding lines in order to know how to proceed. When my fathoms touch no bottom, I fear that I may be standing on the brink of a cliff and need to retreat forward by another path. Occasionally, I have felt a strong prompting to stride faithfully ahead. Often, though, I am confused by what I think I hear and circle indecisively. Sometimes, I imagine sniping opponents lurking in the darkness, camouflaging themselves by imitating wild animals. Sometimes, I shudder at evolutionary echoes of "pseudo-speciation" (Erikson, 1969) which fanatically hate other species, and I doubt my *geschwisterlichkeit* (brotherhood and sisterhood) to all animals and plants who also exist upon this planet. To forget my fears and doubts, I frequently sound myself to sleep with the electronic jabber emitted from radios and television. Yet amidst a cosmos of murmuring noise, I look to listen for authentic resonances of sound and silence to guide--*hear/here/Hear! Hear!*--life.

One of the first reverberations which hearkens me ahead is Chaucer's introductory benediction for his Oxford Clerk in The Canterbury Tales: "And gladly wolde he lerne

and gladly teche" (p. 17). The signifier which immediately impresses me here is how "gladly" the Clerk is to learn and teach. Both are his joys. His "gladness" invites me to *Hear! Hear!* teaching and learning as passionately as Molly Bloom "yes's" her love of life in Ulysses (Joyce, 1961). Even though I often question the value of past efforts, wonder about the relevance of what I am presently doing, find a rational equilibrium difficult to maintain, rage against petty problems, tire of tedious assignments, and long for more fulfilling encounters, I still sing diatonic "si's" of affirmation which rejoice at the ambiguity of everything which lies before and behind the learning of teaching.

When I listen more closely to the pyrrhic interruption in Chaucer's iambic and trochaic rhythms, I become aware of the repetition of *and's* hiding in the background. In a literal sense, the first *and* serves as a narrative expletive which connects to the earlier description, and at the same time, introduces the concluding thought of the couplet. The second conjoins the Clerk's willingness both to learn and to teach. Together, these *and's* connote that a teacher's role is not separate from a learning role and that no description is complete in and of itself. Although individual life appears to have a definite beginning and end, each person's journeys are really only mid-stream fragments of never-finished yet interrelated stories. Something has gone on before each life-toward-death, and something will come afterwards. The medieval Oxford Clerk, if there ever really was such a character, has been embodied in C. Seeseasi, if there really is such a persona.

I have endeavored to represent this masked, mysterious, interconnected continuance through--"&"--in this essay's title. As a signifier, the ampersand is an especially appropriate hieroglyph because it suggests that my pilgrimage to uncover heard and yet unheard clefs for leading learning is not a straight, carpentered line; instead, it is a trail of trials that repeatedly crosses itself. And what is important about an "&" journey is not getting the right meanings of a term such as instructional leadership. Names and titles change.

Heidegger clearly recognized that the verbiage of philosophy altered from one era to another, and he, himself, subsequently attempted to reshape the question of his own

classic Being and Time by postulating other titles--"Opening and Presence"--in the essay "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" (1977, p. 392). Like the Chaucer citation, Heidegger repeatedly cites/sights/sites "*and*." It unpresumptuously connects more powerful metaphysical words, yet it also hints that what Heidegger was really looking out for was "the difference between Being and beings *as a difference*, with 'and' in the difference, with how the difference gets opened up in the various metaphysical epochs" (Caputo, p. 179). Heidegger's search was after that which lay between the meanings of Being and beings. In a similar sense, the aim of my "&" is a mnemonic for learning to step between dividing differences and find meandering hyphenations for understanding how to proceed onward.

My title's open-ending ellipsis--"* * *"--marks the incompleteness of my journey. This essay (or attempt to say) is only a plumb line of my horizontal meditations at this particular moment. As long as I can think, I will continue searching for meanings of words and guessing at their relation to the gift of incarnation. Yet in spite of the amount of time I hang around words and never-ending interpretations of them, I believe that it is impossible to use them to lead a Tower of Babel assault into a heaven of scientifically neutral answers. Instead, it is crucial for the leader of learners to walk behind gladly and let artistic thoughts of genius--which may be ringing like hand bells in a mute pupil's mind--emerge. Tingling reverberations of "the thought of reconstruction" enabled Marie to find her own power to step ahead at one particular site. Yet most of the time, for myself at least, the messages of how to live meaningfully keep getting covered up with distractions, misunderstanding, and forgetfulness.

Consequently, it is necessary for both teacher and student to go back and petition and *re-PETITION* past cryptograms in order to have the faith and loving which are needed to keep going in this world. While I feelingly continue to take the next two or three steps which my night vision allows, I am waiting for the eternal part of myself and others to come out clear. And just as the asterisk, *, points in a multiplicity of directions, so are my listening walks headed in a variety of directions: both downward and upward,

inward and outward, right and left, perpendicular and askew. To experience that which "follows one's bliss" (Campbell, 1987) is to quest after the manifold mysteries which evanesce in the guiding stars of the cosmos. "A star's mighty good company" (Wilder, p. 63, [Our Town]), whether it is a twinkling one doing its crisscross tours in the sky or only a typographical set of elliptical asterisks impaled over a blinking computer cursor.

CHAPTER 7

Emergent Meanings/Opening Other-Wise & Learning To Ripen

> *Stating and denying, saying* (**dire**) *and unsaying* (**dedire**), *evoking and revoking are both necessary to bring our thought into a good relation with the transcendent. But since they cannot be thought simultaneously, their mode is alternation. Instead of the synchronic time of traditional philosophy, the* **diachrony** *of successive affirmations and denials is the only possibility of being true to "what there is and happens" and the conditions thereof. According to Levinas, all discourses must result in the undoing of the tissue they wove. (Peperzak, 1989, p. 20)*

Conclusion

By the conclusion of this dissertative quest, I had hoped to glean bits of fleece and weave them into a multi-colored and multi-textured fabric of "emergent meanings" for instructional leadership. But in structuring this ending, I find that in addition to connecting thematic threads of meaning, I must, like Penelope delaying a household of suitors demanding a response, also take out ("opening other-wise") strands from the patterns that I have woven. It is similar to a Sisyphean labor of rolling the pieces of multiple, interchangeable puzzle pieces together which slide apart when one jigsaw nears completion. Others must rely upon my Heraclitean witness that I personally saw visions of heard meanings of instructional leadership which cannot be experienced the exact same way again. Each human is condemned to be an individual. Yet patterns of experience repeat themselves innumerably, and those who aspire to be instructors and leaders face an infinity of responsibilities which should prompt them to embrace possibilities for wisely loving both the self and the other.

Emergent Meanings

> *"What's in a name?" (Shakespeare, p. 484, [Romeo and Juliet])*

Conscious understandings of human life are inseparably intertwined with language. The meanings of a person, place, object, or concept are not only derived from associations with the thing or idea itself, but also from the intention and interpretation of words individually and socially authored and read to represent a particular essence: "'a rose by any other name would smell as sweet,' but it would not mean the same thing." My parodic aphorism of Juliet's wonder about "What's in a name?" does not deny the

"arbitrariness" of pairing sound with meaning (Esau, 1980), but it emphasizes the Herculean task for Romeo to "tear the word" of his given names (Shakespeare, 1968, p. 484). In spite of his desire to baptize himself with a new identity, Romeo cannot simply dispense with the parentage of his ways of knowing and being known. In fact, it is impossible for any human just to unsay the inherited said. Instead, the old words of previous generations trace past ways of being, while new names demarcate present and future ontologies. As Peperzak claims, "the ways in which beings appear or 'are' can be heard in language" (p. 9). This intimates that words both bring and gather etymologies of meanings from speakers and listeners, and these said meanings preside, often silently, behind attempts to say--and be--something new or old to others in time.

A New and Effective Myth

As a bid to say something definitive about what school administrators of the late 1980's and early 1990's should do, instructional leadership appears to have become an authorized name (Houston; Minister of Education for the Province of Alberta) primarily promulgated by a movement in education that thematically idealizes ways to achieve scientifically effective teaching and administrating. An "effective" instructional leader acts to "improve student achievement," "sets clear goals and objectives," and "systematically demonstrates concerns about teachers by working with them to improve instructional strategies" (McGee). The sets of specified behaviors may vary somewhat from one text to the next (Achilles; Barth; Davis & Nicklos; Ellis; Kroeze; Peterson, 1986; Peterson, 1987), but each of these authors project fairly similar actions and techniques of how to achieve the legendary goal of administrative excellence.

The thrust of this educationally scientific way of mythologizing what should happen in "effective" schools, however, seems to drive solely toward an unsubstantially imagined simulacrum of success. As Smyth (1985) argues,

> There is a need to get behind the rhetoric...to analyze the meanings that are actually embedded in what we do *with* and *to* teachers, so as to expose and begin to grapple with the contradictions of being human" (p. 12-13)

But failure to understand what lies behind and within models of effective leadership is

not valued as a precious treasure for learning. Instead, subjective concerns are discredited, and individuals are expected to forget their own personal problems and model systematic scientific observations of educational behaviors. In the thematic ideals of instructional leadership literature for "effective" schools, there is no room for sinners.

Consequently, those who do not live up to this "bigger than life" ideal may feel guilty for what they are not doing and regard the venture as too idealistic to be practical (Thoms). School leaders are continually supposed to get better, but they can never actually attain the holy grail of objectives which the "effective" literature sets for them to achieve in an imperfect planetary system that will eventually measure all its inhabitants, even those who continually aspire to get success, into a thermodynamic state of entropic uniformity. Thus, although the term, the goals, and the strategies for achieving a technology of instructional leadership may sound new and promising, the "effective" recipes can only guarantee experiences with failure.

Hearing a Value in the Failures of Older Crusades

What is needed are broader understandings about both the inevitability and blessings of failed utopian aims. Nietzsche argues that mortals need to learn to value their failures: "All eternal joy longs for failures" (Nietzsche, 1982, p. 436, [Thus Spoke Zarathustra: Fourth Part]). One way to do this is to take time to hear the resonant texts of older crusaders, whose watchwords may no longer be fashionable, but who also hoped to find ways of perfecting the educating of humanity.

An author of a modern campaign to enhance the administration of teaching is Morris Cogan. Cogan (1953) was an earlier believer in the ideal that scientific inquiry could help define teaching as a profession and allow it to be regarded as more than a folklore of informal practices. Along with Goldhammer (1969), Cogan ended up in the 1960's and 1970's advocating "clinical supervision" (Cogan, 1973) as a rationale for ongoing, professional teacher education "where supervisor and teacher work together *every* day for a prolonged period of time" (Garman, 1986c, p. 4). The time, effort, and power-sharing required to develop sustained professional relationships between teachers and

supervisors lost out, however, to more instrumental interpretations of clinical supervision (Acheson & Gall; Glatthorn; Glickman, 1985). As universities hurried to establish programs of supervision during the 1970's and as the number of articles offering interpretations of clinical supervision mushroomed so rapidly during the 1980's that it became virtually impossible to publish an up-to-date bibliography of them, what became most frequently valued was a "commodification of clinical supervision" (Garman, 1988). This desire to package a technology, rather than experience professional development, resulted in the production of a plethora of intensive programs (National IOTA Council; Hunter, 1984; Ellett) that could be sold to school districts for taking quick snapshots of teachers' instruction and that could even double as a means of managing the evaluation of teachers.

But the absence of any mention of "clinical supervision" with respect to administrative duties in Alberta's School Act (Minister of Education for the Province of Alberta) seems to imply a changing of the guard, at least in the minds of some prominent Albertan educators. *Instructional leadership* appears to be the new kid on the block to describe empirical hopes for seeking an educationally administrated utopia as universities and governments scramble to establish formal instructional leadership programs (Alberta Consortium for the Development of Leadership in Education) and as literature reviews of this buzzword seem to grow exponentially each year. As the etymological development of "clinical supervision" demonstrates, however, the bandwagon of popularity is likely not to last unabated. The rise to power of a particular way of describing something may be supplanted by the supremacy of a different descriptor tomorrow.

Yet in this evolving preference for one expression over another, there are deeper allusive connections with the aspirations of previous generations. Cogan did not just invent "clinical supervision" but built upon the foundation of Nutt's descriptions of the principal's supervisory functions fifty years earlier. In fact, Cuban chronicles that a principals' duties have for more than a century emphasized both the *supervisory* (Twelfth Annual Report of the Common Schools of Cincinnati; Seventeenth Annual Report of the

St. Louis Board of Education; Cubberly, 1923b; & Morrison) and the *bureaucratic* (Boston School Committees' Annual Report; McMurray; Cubberly, 1923a; Callahan). And while Brookover, Lezotte, Edmonds, Rutter, and Weber and a Phi Delta Kappan study concluded that the principal's leadership and attention to the quality of instruction were prominent characteristics of an effective school, Cubberly (1929) expressed virtually the same concept a half a century earlier with his assertion that "as is the principal, so is the school" (p. 294). A pattern which emerges from each of these citations is the recurring belief that the principal can be the supervising teacher who manages to save the schooling community.

This suggests that, while a science of education offers new bags of tricks for drawing or verifying conclusions about the professional importance and the effective techniques of providing instructional guidance, the hope which underlies new or older leadership quests is for an educational "hero with a thousand faces" (Campbell, 1956) who can teach and rule with authority. Seen in this light, *instructional leadership* is actually a symbol for an archetypal savior, which has a long history of deeply embedded roots. The technologies of modern-day aspirations are not really all that distant from the desires of previous generations.

Yet in spite of millennia of humans searching for an answer to the question of what it means to teach and lead others with power and justice, no one society or group or individual has found the exhaustive answer. And the deficits of the past and present resurrect the dilemma of how to take joy in failure. Barton (1987) offers an interesting perspective about imperfect definitions of teaching by comparing the curriculum and instructional methods of three legendary teachers--Lao Tzu of Ch'u, Zeno of Elea, and Jesus of Nazareth--and concluding:

> There is no sure way of teaching.... What works in one century may fail in the next, and as every classroom teacher knows, what works one Monday morning may fail the next Monday. When one stops to think about it, it is this ephemeral nature of teaching which is its greatest glory. (p. 18)

The grandeur of teaching is that it is always dealing with beings in the flux of time. This means that teaching and its administration cannot simply be scientifically predicted and

reach an "effective" stasis. The only *status quo* for teaching human beings is to rejoice continually in questioning the failing imperfections of every *status quo*.

Opening Other-Wise

> *"It is the ethical interruption of essence that energizes the reduction...that opens the listening eye to hear the echo of the otherwise." (Levinas, p. 44)*

To take out the weaving of my thematic strands is to strive to fathom the Charybdis of thinking and acting wisely for the other--to open *other-wise*. As Peperzak explains the ethical presuppositions of Levinas, every trial to communicate embodies responsibilities for the other:

> Levinas indicates a more radical oblivion when he points to a very simple fact, which surprisingly never has been taken into serious account by philosophy: *the fact that a discourse or epos (or Sage) always is said by someone to one or more others (or to oneself as listener or reader). (p. 11)*

One reason philosophy and science have failed to grasp the import of saying and listening is that the gift of life resists being theorized. The said expresses intentions about phenomena, but the dimensions of saying go beyond rational classification games and search to become aware of "the source of creativity" which resides even in the prick of an unplucked flower (Bindeman, 1981, p. 127). To sound saying is to plumb otherwise than toward said themes; it is to open the mystery of pre-original relationships, which "in its antecedence to my freedom...is a responsibility that goes beyond being" (Levinas, p. 15). Each individual is fatefully responsible for speaking to and hearing the other: with dead generations, with beings who presently dwell upon the earth, and with yet unborn populations.

Reflective Opening to Think

One such public opening for leaders and teachers to think personally about concrete problems, not primarily about objective goals, of their professional knowledge has been created by the proponents for "reflection-in-action" (Schon, 1983, 1988) or of "reflection on action" and "reflection through recollection" (Garman, 1986c). These authors critique the mainstream of technical rationality which characterizes the positivistic philosophy motivating much of the research of educational science, and they advocate a

need to muddle thoughtfully within the mucky swamps of lived experiences. In lieu of just learning the thematic objectives recommended for success, educators must learn to engage repeatedly in processes of inquiry that investigate the complex and unpredictable difficulties which are experienced daily in actual practice.

Building on reflective and on ethnographic (Glaser & Strauss) ways of framing educational studies, the Peer Assisted Leadership (PAL) case studies (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, and Bossert; Dwyer, 1986a, 1986b; & Barnett, 1985, 1987) have challenged the more prominent "effective" definitions of instructional leadership. The PAL developers claim that a uniform description of instructional leadership is not possible. Instead, they advance the rationale that instructional leadership "accrues from repetition of routine and mundane acts performed in accord with a principal's overarching perspective on schooling" (Dwyer, Lee, Rowan, & Bossert, p. 66). This perspective challenges leaders to become aware of their repetitive actions and to develop conscious definitions of instructional leadership which are consistent with their own personalities and communities. In contrast to much of the "effective" leadership literature, the key emphasis of PAL is to encourage thought about personal models of instructional leadership which relate to the complex contradictions found at each school.

My particular methods of investigating meanings of instructional leadership have endeavored to stay on reflective margins. In Chapter 4, I used "reflection through recollection" (Garman, 1986c) as a means of linking my past experiences as a teacher with my aims as a collaborative inquirer. I went on and used "reflection-in-action" (Schon, 1983, 1987) in working with Dale Ripley [redacted] to refine teacher evaluation and with Kathy Smith on linking processes of teacher and student evaluation with learning. The PAL methodology (Barnett, 1985, 1987) guided my case study of Steve Ramsankar's leadership at Alex Taylor Community School (Chapter 5). Then, after reflectively revisiting each of my collaborative works, I next stepped between the restrictions of collaborative inquiry and endeavored to reflect on what I individually thought about instructing and leading (Chapter 6). In each instance, both collaborative and personal, the

application of various forms of reflection prompted me to prioritize an understanding of the individual situation, not to aim at having myself and others put on a procrustean costume of "effective" ideals. Consequently, it is difficult to make empirical generalizations from personal reflections. Hopefully, they may prompt some educators to act thoughtfully in facing their respective problems.

In spite of such a hope, a constant danger persists. In the drive of reflective methodologies to provide an "overarching perspective" for individuals (Barnett, 1987) or to make "generalizations" about case studies of principals (Dwyer, 1986b) or to invite other administrators and teachers to experiment with a tactic of "role reversals" (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, & Maguire, 1989), such reflective suggestions may be interpreted into sets of themes, techniques, or behaviors which an educational system will "mandate the use of" (Gambell & Newton, 1989). The human ambition to transform the saying of thoughts into a said of rational truths never seems to end. As Heidegger (1977) repeatedly warned: "Most thought-provoking in our thought-provoking time is that we are still not thinking" (p. 347). Reflective strategies are not surrogates for thought. Reflection only offers an opening invitation for individuals to leap into continually concealing whirlpools where thinking may momentarily be unconcealed.

Openly Acting Other-Wise

Consequently, reflective meditation is not a self-sufficient means of educating. Barton, for instance, claims that "teaching is a pragmatic art" (p. 18). Foster (1986) sees the challenge for educators as, "a profession whose purpose *is* to make a difference. The joy of being an administrator or a teacher is to recognize and understand that each life makes a difference" (p. 70). By implication, leadership of instruction seems to call for thoughtful action that is morally wise in making a difference. Bates confirms such a view by arguing that instructional leadership is a "social and moral activity" which involves a "conflictual web of inter-relationships" (p. 14). Klinck suggests that a more thought-provoking and all-encompassing title is needed: "moral arbiter." Duignan and Macpherson formed the Australian Educational Leadership Project (ELP) in order to help teachers and

academic specialists collectively question: "How should leaders in education decide what is important? How will leaders know that they are morally right when they act?" (p. 4). Carr and Kemmis advocate "emancipatory action research" as an approach whereby both practitioners and researchers can become jointly critical of practice. Again, a few authors, who tend to write along the banks of the prevailing "effective" currents of instructional leadership literature, have recognized that a socially constructed morality of interrelationships underlies all that gets done and fails to get done at any school.

I relied on this marginal critique of social morality in my efforts to enact an ethic of instructional leadership that empowers both individuals and groups to imprint their voices in a dialogue with the surrounding world. Action research (Kemmis & McTaggart) provided a strategy for practitioners to take responsibility for the development and investigation of their own respective practices. As a facilitator external to the school, I was able to share the plans and ideas of those on the inside, provide an outside point of view, and also to become an insider-practitioner by uncovering selfish ways of refining my own teaching for others. Eventually, this process of collaborative inquiry led to texts of collaborative authorship (Hart, Ripley, Poulin, & Maguire, 1989; Ripley & Hart; Hart & Smith; Smith & Hart). The inclusion of two collaboratively inquisitive articles in Chapter 5 serves as a declaration of independence proclaiming that guaranteeing anonymity should not be the only ethic which guides educational research: teachers voices need to be heard. How can teachers really become responsible agents if researchers paternally keep all of them anonymous and never encourage them to question or to author? Admittedly, risks are associated with authoring, and I have detailed some of them in my introduction and by revisiting my collaborative articles in Chapter 5, but the ethics governing the investigation of educative acts need to consider more critically the consequences of both anonymity and authored participation.

The realization that educators need to ponder the ethical consequences of their actions and inaction should not generate a metaphysical pronouncement of universal ethical imperatives or a technological vision of predictable moral stages but more of a

passive and active openness to heed individual calls for facing the other. One of the abilities this more open ethic requires is good ears, metaphorically speaking, in order to hear the "ethics of the ear": an expression which characterizes the "something like ethical responsibility" in Derrida's texts and is "directed toward letting the other speak" (Michelfelder, 1989, p. 53). An open listener does not pretend to speak for the signature of the other but attends to letting the ultimately un-interpretable signs which represent the alterity of the other speak for themselves. An example of this type of pedagogy is provided in Marie's words (Seeseasi & Seeville) when she proposes that to teach is to help children "move up" by allowing them to author the power already present within themselves (Chapter 6, p. 174). Likewise, to lead a teacher opens "andragogic" opportunities to teach adults (Knowles, 1970), and such teaching moments require attention to learning styles that are "differentiated" (Glatthorn). An open ethic is a willing wisdom to listen while walking before, beside, or behind as the situation may dictate.

But to hearken after an ethic of openings is not simply an irresponsible invitation to let others say or do whatever they please. Journeys toward discovering the power of personal or social voices need to be continually questioned about the ways in which power or influence is exercised with respect to others. Unfortunately, most humans, including myself, seem predisposed to abuse any power they gain over others. This means that an open ethic must also act as an "ethics of dissemination" (Caputo): "to *intervene* in ongoing processes, to keep institutions in process, to keep the *forms* of life from eliminating the *life*-form they are supposed to house" (p. 263). The purpose of interventions is to disperse (for the will to power cannot be eliminated) the conglomerations of power which mortals continually try to structure around and between themselves. It is not easy to live open to mystery, and so people anesthetize their fears of the unpredictable mutations that will eventually contort their respective lives-toward-death. An open ethic, however, continually intercedes to remind people to accept the mysterious flux of living and dying. In lieu of sowing a facade of technological or metaphysical answers, thought-provoking questions function as the daily semen for disseminating responsible, ethical openings.

In and of themselves, though, the opening ethics of a listening ear and questioning semen, like the scientific eye or the metaphysical tongue, are symbolic organs which are not more important than any of the other still unmentioned parts belonging to a man or woman. Each appendage of the body, like the smallest event of a person's daily life, has a value beyond price. A body of ethics can never be adequately described by thematicizing one part as essential and ignoring the other. What matters is that people learn to meditate and act in ways that will sustain and nourish "the communality that binds everyone together" (Gadamer, 1986, p. 135). Each member, both individually and collectively, needs to be patiently encouraged and humbly persuaded to care unpretentiously and sacrificially one for another.

A more excellent way is living the sort of life that embodies love for the other. Levinas suggests as much when he defines the word *philosophy* as "the wisdom of love at the service of love" (Levinas, p. 162). This definition challenges individuals to question for ways to "dramatize the otherwise than being" (Levinas, p. 4). The power of acting wisely for the other, or *other-wise*, was recently demonstrated to me when, while I was working with some upper elementary students, one child thought I looked sad, so he embraced me and then said, "I couldn't think of anything else to do, so I gave you a hug." The import of such a caring confrontation keeps eluding human disclosure. Yet acting lovingly is the daily responsibility which homo sapiens must learn to face and embrace if they are to become "Sapient-Homo," a "wise species" (OED, 7, p. 334).

& Learning To Ripen

> *"And this is all that I have found--the impossibility of knowledge! It is this that burns away in my heart." (Goethe, 1966, p. 286, [Faust])*

As I now complete this portion of a three-year odyssey to understand public/personal meanings of instructional leadership, all that I can confidently declare is, like Goethe's Faust, the impossibility of knowing or being all. I cannot conclude that I know how to embody or that I have become a personification of instructional leadership, as my "opening" title (Chapter 1, p. 1) for "incarnate" meanings might imply that I should. For although I can profess to have learned a great deal about the history and development

of the term *instructional leadership* and although I have collaborated with some truly outstanding educators, I still do not know what the words instructional leadership mean when they become blended with flesh and blood at a particular schooling site. None of the technological or reflective or moral strategies provides a magic recipe which everyone should be mandated to follow, and no one person emerges as the paragon that all other educators must imitate. All systems and all humans are incomplete or flawed in some way. Consequently, what burns away in my heart at this stage of my career is not "to stretch myself on a bed of ease" (Goethe, p. 317) but to continue my quests to learn how public meanings of language coordinate with personal interpretations of what is and what can be.

Yet if I aspire to be a learner, then what does that involve. Heidegger (1977) asserts that "to learn means to make everything we do answer to whatever addresses itself to us as essential" (pp. 349-350). In so saying, he is suggesting that possibilities for learning are present in the every action. Humans are engulfed by chances to learn. The omnipresence of opportunities, however, is one of the reasons that learning is so difficult to apprehend; they are so common that they become regarded as commonplace and are generally ignored. As a consequence, that which can be learned is constantly withdrawing. Nietzsche (1982) clearly demonstrated how withdrawal applied to religion when he announced the death of a god who withdrew from a hypocritical, faithless humanity. That which is essential keeps eluding leaps of human prehension.

The challenge of learning, then, is not to bypass the ever-present actions for learning in a mad rush to invent and build convenient technologies, which has been the thrust of much modern schooling. Learning is not just intending to find essential answers for living better but also allowing the essence of whatever presents itself to submit questions for thoughtfully learning how to better live. I, for instance, tried to answer a question about the technology of my teaching in my paper "Spare the Red Pen and See the Child" (Chapter 6, pp. 156-163). Whitman, on the other hand, learned the essence of his poetry by observing a spear of summer grass, "I believe a leaf of grass is no less than the journey-work of the stars" (p. 46). To learn is to embark on a long journey of disclosing

what presents itself as essential to each individual.

Consequently, I do not foresee my ongoing treks to uncover learning being easy. I know from my experiences in this dissertation that learning abounds in difficulties. Learning is not a carpentered line drawn straight to absolute structures of knowledge. For me, to learn is to embark on a trail of trials that repeatedly crosses itself like the winding twists of an ampersand, and just as & is an abbreviation for the conjunction *and*, no one can ever learn enough. After a person has explained everything, the rejoinder "and" implies that there is always more to learn. And *and* tends to be unconsciously ubiquitous. Few people pay much attention to it, although I have known a few teachers who gave it disapproving recognition by refusing to include it as part of a word count for completed essays. Yet *and* often crops up in important places: Gadamer (1975) used it in Truth and Method, while Heidegger employed it in Being and Time and later in postulating an alternative "Opening and Presence" (1977, p. 392). What these titles demonstrate, as well as computer searches, is that *and* is one of the most effective commands for limiting the breadth of a topic or of a review of literature: it forces analysis or research to focus only on specifically conjoined terms. The *and*, therefore, serves as my mnemonic that there are innumerable things for everyone to learn and that the search to disclose learning can be continually directed toward a more precise and vexing understanding of an abundance of mysteries.

As I have interpreted the hermeneutic challenge to learn, it is to listen for whatever withdraws itself from learning and then to disclose what its essences are. And after spending a considerable number of hours investigating meanings of instructional leadership, I believe that learning has essentially emerged as that which the provision of instructional leadership hints toward but never seems to mention very much. To guide and even change how educators act and think to is the essential task of both instructing and leading, and to me, that sounds like a desire to help teachers learn to learn. Thus, while I have found instructional leadership to be an intriguing attempt to rename the professional administration of instruction in modern schools, I have come to believe that disclosing

meanings of learning is an older, more essential question which permeates what the words instructional leadership are really trying to get administrators and teachers to understand and do.

Yet deeper mysteries about learning lie beyond hermeneutic desires to unconceal the meanings of learning. Heidegger (1977) comes close to acknowledging them when he explains that a teacher has far more to learn than students: "he has to learn to let them learn" (p. 356). What is being insinuated is the teacher's responsibility for the learner, a relationship which cannot be fully interpreted or predicted. As Levinas suggests "My exposure to another in my responsibility for him takes place without a decision on my part. It is exposure to the openness of a face" (p. 180). The key repetition in this excerpt is the use of "exposure." This word intimates that learning has another signification than that of disclosure. Instead of learning to gain access to essences by opening doors or windows of unconcealment, the mere face of another exposes that all human structures are full of gaping holes. No matter how poor or rich, each individual is obliged to accept responsibilities for others or, as Malcolm X (X & Haley, 1965) expressed just before his assassination, "to offer a society where rich and poor could truly live like human beings" (p. 377). Exposed learning does not rest behind illusory walls of comforting amenities but is repeatedly committing both mind and body to ageless obligations to suckle the needs of another as the homeless Ma Joad and Rose-of-Sharon did for a toothless, starving beggar at the end of Steinbeck's (1968) Grapes of Wrath.

How to live so lovingly exposed for the other is that for which I question and quest to realize. Personally, I usually find myself walking past or drowsily ignoring my Samaritan duties for a begging Lazarus. When I have faced my obligations to other's faces, I have been exposed to brief moments of learning which arrest, for the space of a breath, my busy task-oriented hands and goal-driven eyes and cause me to apprehend the surrounding "abundance" of opportunities (Walsh, 1990) to learn and the need to expiate my own selfish pettiness. Yet in spite of such cornucopia, I soon revert back to doing my own things, forgetting what I thought I had learned. Hence, like disclosed learning,

exposure also leads me to the ongoing cycles of learning, unlearning, and relearning.

This means that the lessons to be learned from life are never done, and to the best of my abilities, I need to continue my *quest-ioning* pilgrimages. Perhaps I can begin to express my existential commitment to keep learning by alluding, as I have often done in this dissertation, to some literary allegories. In Shakespeare's King Lear the last five words which the audience hears Edgar say as he guides his blind father to the site of his death are: "Ripeness is all. Come on" (p. 1179). This statement offers an engaging parallel to Hamlet's counsel to Horatio "The readiness is all.... Let be" (Shakespeare, pp. 931-932). Both Hamlet and Edgar are expressing similar ideas about how to live toward death, yet the different words they use invite radically disparate interpretations.

In authoring a renewed reading of these texts, I find that I can no longer endorse Hamlet's earlier maxim. A trained soldier's unthinking readiness, if it goes mad, can lead to the type of massacres that occurred in Vietnam at Mai Lai or in death camps like Auschwitz. Also, I find a danger in the suggestion that "readiness" is an acquiescence to "let" conspiracies of murder "be." In contrast, Edgar's words and actions dramatize a more mature fruitfulness that loves to lead and be led in seeking to find responsible, caring pathways through a labyrinth of experiences with injustices: poverty, hostilities, prejudices, conspiracies, contumelies, perjuries, hypocrisies, vanities, greediness, gluttony, illnesses, etc. Ripeness is a gentle command to "come on" and meet courageously but forgivingly those forces opposed to the timeless responsibilities to love the other.

But again, I must again admit that I fail to possess this mythical mature state which Shakespeare has called "ripeness." The fault, however, does not totally lie within me; "it is not we who play with words; rather the essence of language plays with us" (Heidegger, 1977, p. 365). Functioning as a noun, ripeness is immobilized as a fixed state, an idealized said attempting to rename a previous "all" important naming of what life "is." As with any kerygmatic renaming (i. e. instructional leadership falls into this same linguistic trap), the supplanting of one substantive for another simply calls attention to the inability of language to provide the costume for a unified field of knowledge and being.

No single expression can be the last word. In the language games of naming and renaming the world, signifiers cannot stay from sliding. The signification of the said can only hint at the saying that is beyond knowledge or being.

In order to insinuate more precisely the dynamic of living with and for others, I have opted to end my title of this chapter with the infinitive "to ripen." Verbality is still part of the dictionary of said meanings, yet this part of speech more actively intimates that "being is meant and heard as time" (Peperzak, p. 9). Verbs acknowledge that life is constantly in transit. When ripeness becomes conjugated, it more strongly alludes to the flux of being. To ripen does not denote a perfect state of being able to do or know all but connotes growth that endures to the end, even to a reaping of learning from the sublime fruits of death. One of the most important lessons King Lear learned was that in spite of his many sovereign achievements, he could not simply retire from responsibilities for others: "only the meanings of the other are inexcusable, and forbid the reclusion and reentry into the shell of the self" (Levinas, p. 183). Maturation is not simply a matter of age but a living charge to respond to the verbal and nonverbal calls to "come on" and be a ripening part of mortal treks with others.

This is why the more authentic catharsis in Shakespeare's dramatic fiction is implied by Edgar. He is the character who most strongly hints at the importance of carrying on with living. Consequently, the unnamed heroes are the audience: they are the ones who can leave the theatre when the curtain drops. And instead of weeping for the deaths of any of the fictional characters, the audience members should continually fear and hope to realize the importance of each breath they take. The future of the dramatis personae is bound by that which has already been said about them; the incarnate drama is exposed to the flux of saying something to one or more others. None of the audience really knows exactly what will happen next as the play of life pushes them forward.

In so saying, I am impressed with the analogy of life being like drama, which may explain why I have been so drawn to an excerpt from a Shakespearean text in writing this ending. Theater only truly exists in the present--the now. And just as a character in a

play only comes alive when he or she is being performed, so an actor is only as good as the present performance being given. And when an actor is not acting, the rest is playing, observing, disciplining, thinking, and praying: waiting for the text of the said to transform the actor and magically find expression in saying something meaningful to an audience. If successful, such a metamorphosis will cause those who are alive to think for an ephemeral moment about the priceless value of their own and of other's incarnation.

The audience, then, is a partner in the dramatic process, although they may mistakenly believe that they are called upon only to watch, appreciate, remember, criticize, and forget. If they really understand the essence of the living drama, spectators are not unlike the authentic actor who, if successful, has intensely lived three lives in one: wedding a said past with a saying in the present and ripening to learn how to proceed on into an unknowable future. For my life, I can no longer believe in the illusion that I am only a spectator of living. As an inhaling and exhaling being, I am an actor. I always have been. For to rephrase T. S. Eliot's poetic line "you are the music while the music lasts" (p. 844["Dry Salvages"]): I am the drama--all who are a part of the saying of life are the drama--while the drama lasts.

So as the play of my own life continues, my thoughts for my own future are quite naturally full of uncertainties. While I write these words, I am preparing to return to the same high school, even the same room, I left three years ago. I know that I am not actually returning to school which prompted the writing of my "archipelago" paper (Chapter 4), for the school (both in its personnel and artifacts) and I have undergone many changes in the intervening years. New challenges are already presenting themselves to me. In facing them I expect not only to find ways of challenging what I or other leaders, teachers, students, and parents say or do or fail to do, but I especially need to demonstrate that I can forgive: to give for others and to go forward with them. I might take some solace in Heidegger's (1977) statement that "It is still an exalted matter, then, to become a teacher--which is something else entirely than becoming a famous professor" (p. 356) if it did not so hauntingly test me to be a wise leader of children and a discerning

follower of my own instructional leaders: to be *other-wise*. Teaching is the most difficult profession because it is so artfully knotted with uncertainties of both disclosing and being exposed to learning. Nevertheless, I again commit my energy and time to teaching--enwrapping the aroma of my fragrant armpits around its daily chores, enduring petty agonies and jealousies in the hope of making a difference in at least one child's life, betting my Faustian soul that I will continue my mortal quest-ioning of opening opening openings to the mystery of incarnate meanings, and learning to ripen for responsibly facing and serving others.

APPENDIX

Personal Evaluation Alternatives For Charles Hart

November 4, 1986

Concerning evaluation and my personal evaluation model, my hope is to be treated as a human being. I freely admit that I have both weaknesses and strengths which are a part of my being, and I hope that administrators and evaluators who work with me will tolerate my weaknesses, providing they are not harmful to my students, and will nurture the strengths of my being. I believe that each individual in this school is part of a divine plan and purpose, and I would like to think that working at _____ High School can still be a part of the purpose of why I am on this earth.

When administrators and evaluators want to engage in evaluating me, they should know that I have a hard time believing in a crystal clear distinction between objective data and subjective interpretation. I believe that the most important part of the evaluation process is that the teacher and evaluator dialogue together about teaching. The dialogue, an active discussion, is the best method for attempting to make sense of how the observer and the observed think and feel about the thousands of interactions, behaviors, and decisions which go on in the space of a classroom.

Because of my need for dialogue about my teaching, I reject the application of transitory, uncommunicative visits. I find them barren for my development as a teacher and disrespectful to my person. When an evaluator or colleague visits me, I expect them not to view evaluation as something they do **to** me, but evaluation is an opportunity to work **with** me. My door is always open to an administrator or evaluator who wants to have a "working session of dialogue with me."

Personal Evaluation Goals

I have already submitted a paper outlining some research and my personal beliefs about supervision, and I would encourage administrators and evaluators to read that paper as preamble to the specific proposals which I will make in this paper. I hope that my suggestions for evaluation will be acceptable as the framework for a summative and formative evaluation model. The developmental activities which I propose in respect to my teaching are:

1. I have prepared course outlines and a class rules handout for each of the courses I teach. This year I sent copies of these documents, along with the first assignment which I received from students, to those parents who have children in English 10. I try to adhere very closely to my outlines, and I believe that they establish a foundation for students, parents, administrators and evaluators to discuss my specific goals for my classroom instruction.

2. I am available for summative evaluation visits from the superintendent or his assistant. I would welcome such visits as a way of improving the communication between the individual teachers, such as myself, and the superintendent.

3. I have completed self-evaluation forms for the past three years. The self-evaluation form which I used this year is found in the ATA Cooperative Assessment Manual. I hope that administrators and evaluators would take the time to review my self-evaluation in preparing for "working sessions of dialogue with me."

4. I meet on a weekly basis with my special friend and colleague--_____. We discuss concerns we have about students, curriculum, and teaching. While I have not written formal reports of these discussions, they do occur frequently, and evaluators should know that they are probably the most important part of my formative development as a teacher.

5. I also hope to begin meeting with _____ and other social studies teachers as a way of attempting to coordinating objectives and instruction between Social Studies and English.

6. As a result of the collegial relationship which I have developed with _____ through my supervision of his classes, I request that he be a part of the IOTA evaluation of my teaching. One suggestion I want to make for the IOTA pre- and post-conferences is that they could be videotaped in front of the class.

7. During the month of October, I worked with a student teacher from The University of Lethbridge. This involved four weeks of active supervision of the student teacher and conferences, frequently after school, with the student teacher and his advisor. At the end of this round of supervising a student teacher, I have requested that both the university advisor and the student teacher write an evaluation of my supervision. I want their letters to be added to my teaching dossier; such supervisory work is very important for the profession of teaching, and I think that all teachers should receive credit for engaging in such professional development.

8. As a Professional Development Consultant for The Alberta Teachers' Association, I meet with teachers from all over the province to discuss ways of encouraging professional development. At the Saturday, October 4, 1986 conference of Southern Alberta Professional Development Chairmen and Consultants, we discussed supervision and evaluation activities which are going on in school divisions in Southern Alberta. For example, the Medicine Hat School Division No. 6 has been working with The University of Lethbridge on a project of supervision, which will be studied and evaluated by Alberta Education for the next three years. By participating in at least four provincial and regional professional development conferences such as the one I just mentioned, and through my liaison with P. D. chairmen of ATA locals assigned to me, I have increased my understanding of what other teachers are doing in respect to supervision and professional development and of alternatives and possibilities for myself and colleagues in this school division.

9. I have had my students complete evaluations of my instruction for the past two years, and I plan to repeat this process at the end of 1987. I have these student evaluations on file, and they are available for administrators or evaluators to review upon request.

10. I am enrolled at night courses at The University of Lethbridge as a part of a Master's of Education degree. I am conducting research on how Diploma examinations are affecting instruction in English 30 and English 33 in Alberta. I will complete my paper during the Summer of 1987. I hope that such attempts to improve my education and to do research directly related to the subject I teach will be recognized as having a formative influence upon my teaching.

11. I am involved with a research study on supervision of instruction which a graduate student at The University of Lethbridge has been conducting. I have conducted two pre- and post-conferences with _____, and I will conduct a third set of interviews with _____ in November. The video tapes of the interviews are available for analysis by any _____ school educators. I should point out that the results of this study will be published during the Summer of 1987, and they will also be available for review by administrators and educators.

12. I have presented a paper on teaching at the Journal of Curriculum Theorizing Conference at Dayton, Ohio. I found the experience of associating and communicating with teachers and professors from many different parts of the world to have been very beneficial to me. The most uplifting individual I met at this conference was Steve Ramsankar, a principal in Edmonton who recently received The Order of Canada award for his work in an elementary school for the past 17 years. Mr. Ramsankar is an inspiration to me and my outlook on teaching. Hopefully, evaluation plans for this school and this division could create similar effects within teachers--be inspirational.

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